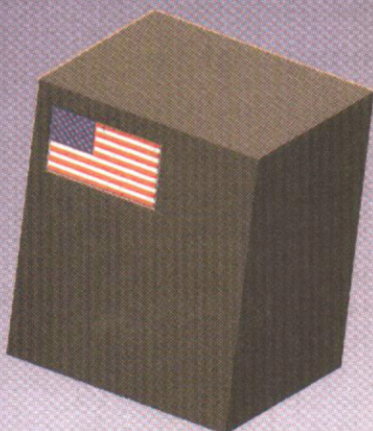
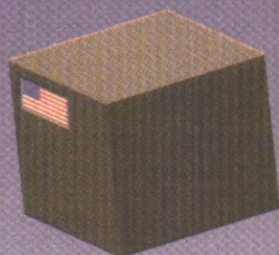
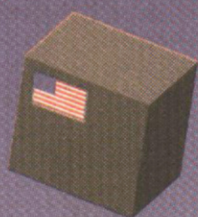
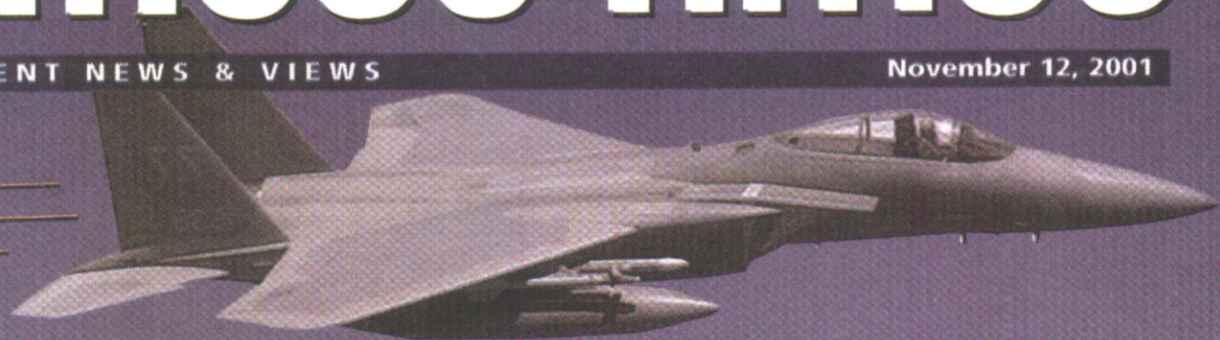


SHAKESPEARE AT THE BARRICADES • SANDINISTA SALVATION?

In These Times

INDEPENDENT NEWS & VIEWS

November 12, 2001



BOMBS & BUTTER

Doug Ireland
David Moberg
Naomi Klein
G. Pascal Zachary
& Michael Moore
on the long war



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Managing Editor: Craig Aaron

Senior Editors: Patricia Aufderheide, David Moberg, Salim Muwakkil

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Contributing Editors: Terry J. Allen, Bill Boisvert, Barbara Ehrenreich, Laura Flanders, Annette Fuentes, Juan Gonzalez, David Graeber, Miles Harvey, Paul Hockenro, George Hodak, Doug Ireland, Naomi Klein, Dave Mulcahey, Geov Parrish, Kim Phillips-Fein, Jeffrey St. Clair, Jane Slaughter, Jason Vest, Fred Weir, G. Pascal Zachary

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Illustrator: Terry LaBan

Associate Publisher: Joshua Rothkopf

Communications/Circulation Director: Luli Buxton

Circulation Manager: Peter Hoyt

Interns: Ashleigh Pacetti, Aaron Sarver

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Editorial

Enduring Freedoms

The war with Osama bin Laden and the Taliban straddles the millennium.

This war, rooted in the 20th century Cold War charnel house, is being waged in a 21st century that is witnessing the emergence of—and struggle over—new codes of international conduct.

People are beginning to see other inhabitants of the planet as fellow citizens, endowed with an equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Human rights organizations, the anti-sweatshop campaigns and the globalization movement are all fueled by an expanding awareness that the well-being of the earth's people should take precedence over the gambits of nations and the profits of corporations.

International organizations and treaties are laying the groundwork for economic and legal standards that would supersede those of nation-states. World trade bodies (were their deep flaws fixed) could provide a basis for an integrated world economy. The International Criminal Court, despite U.S. refusal to accept its jurisdiction, could provide a forum to hold leaders of nation-states accountable for crimes against humanity.

Armed conflicts also have become internationalized. As the September 11 attacks demonstrated, some are no longer limited to self-contained regions. Other wars are limited geographically, but, as in the case of East Timor, the world community takes it as its responsibility to get involved.

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon fostered a nationalistic reaction, but they also personalized war by bringing home the tragedy of civilian lives lost. As a result, many Americans are reluctant to endorse military action that costs further innocent lives. The Bush administration understands this, at least judging by the rhetoric if not the substance of its actions. Adapting to this new reality, the U.S. military has tried to limit the killing of Afghan civilians via "unintended damage."

Yet such an awareness has yet to filter down to the current U.S. policy toward Iraq, where sanctions have taken the lives of up to a million people. Recall that prior to the Gulf War, the Bush Sr. administration, playing a geopolitical power

balancing game, quietly provided more than \$1 billion in aid and more than \$2 billion in loans to support Saddam Hussein, who was still waging war against Iran and massacring Kurds.

Bush was continuing the Reagan administration policy of supporting Iraq over archenemy Iran, which, until the overthrow of the Shah in 1979 by Islamic fundamentalists, had been our best friend and the recipient of 26 years of U.S. military and financial aid—largess that began in 1953 with a CIA-orchestrated coup that deposed the elected government of Mohammed Mosaddeq, who had threatened the profits of transnational oil corporations.

Successive American administrations have squandered the goodwill of the Islamic world through a parade of geopolitical gambits that have placed U.S. commercial interests—unimpeded access to oil—over an interest in doing the right thing. As Henry Kissinger once put it, "Covert action should not be confused with missionary work." (He was explaining the logic of a Nixon-era deadly double-cross of Iraqi Kurds that delivered them to Saddam's forces as part of a backroom deal with the Shah.)

We are now dealing with the consequences of that venal foreign policy. And so far the only lesson the administration seems to have learned is one of public relations. In

**As Henry Kissinger once put it,
"Covert action should not be
confused with missionary work."**

announcing the bombing of Afghanistan, Bush declared that Operation Enduring Freedom aimed to "defend not only our precious freedom but also the freedom of people everywhere to live and raise their children free of fear."

But there are other freedoms: freedom from hunger, freedom from want, freedom from disease, freedom from ignorance, freedom to live in a clean environment, freedom to unionize, freedom of religion, freedom of expression, freedom from war. These freedoms—far from enduring for "people everywhere"—are ones the administration has yet to acknowledge.

Joel Bleifuss

In These Times

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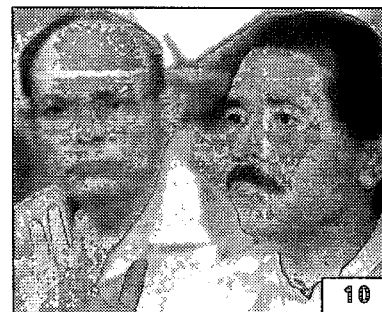
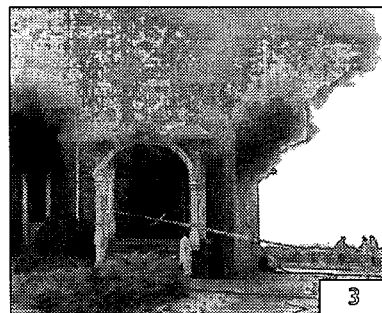
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Cover illustration: Seamus Holman

Letters

Hopeless Dems

I think I am in need of one of Joel Bleifuss' pep talks about how the Democrats are our best hope of changing the rightward direction of the government. As far as I can tell, there's only one of them, California Rep. Barbara Lee, who has demonstrated any spine at all. As far as Congress is concerned, it's Gulf War redux.

Mary Anderson
Humboldt, California

Raiding Social Security

Doug Ireland makes many good points in his article on the response to the September 11 attacks ("War Cry," October 15), but he gets one very important thing wrong. There will be no "raids" on Social Security.

The notion of "raiding" the Social Security surplus was a concept that Bill Clinton's political advisers developed as a way to prevent Republican tax cuts. It has no meaning whatsoever. The Social Security surplus is used to buy government bonds. The Social Security trust fund holds the exact same number of government

bonds regardless of whether the government chooses to save or spend the money.

It makes no more sense to claim that government has "raided" Social Security if it spends the surplus, than it would to claim the government had "raided" the Bank of America because it spent the money it borrowed when it sold the bank a bond. In both cases, the lender holds a bond that it has a legal right to have paid back.

People in the Clinton administration, and many other Democrats, thought their line about raiding Social Security was a very clever political tactic. Others are welcome to judge its wisdom. But it is not true, and we should stop allowing it to be used to scare people about the future of Social Security.

Dean Baker
Center for Economic and
Policy Research
Washington

One of a Klein

Each contribution I have read from Naomi Klein following September 11 has been an enlightened, free and generous call for tolerance, intelligence, peace and true compassion. Please continue the very necessary work of opening people's minds.

Laurent Condominas
Paris

The Leopard's Spots

Hank Hoffman rightly calls attention to new evidence that the FBI is treating

much of the recent protest against corporate globalization as "criminal" ("To the Extreme," October 1). Yet Hoffman's assumption that this evidence indicates a reversion to FBI suppression of "the anti-war and Black power movements in the '60s and '70s" is mistaken.

I suspect that the opponents of U.S. support of government by death squad in El Salvador in the '80s, who, FBI documents show, were subjected to FBI suppression, might disagree. So might scores of other radical dissidents.

The FBI has made a practice for most, if not all, of its existence of suppressing and punishing radicals on the left because of their politics. It is certainly worth noting, as Hoffman does, those occasions on which the FBI implicitly or expressly admits such intentions. However, I think we do a grave disservice to ourselves to suggest that the FBI engages in such practices only on those unusual occasions on which it acknowledges or alludes to them.

Anyone reading this magazine already is surely too old for that.

Randy Baker
Seattle

In These Times is a-Changin'

We bid a fond farewell to associate editor Kristin Kolb-Angelbeck and to associate art director Steve Anderson. Kristin has moved to Vancouver, where she is communications director for the Rainforest Solutions Project, a coalition of four environmental groups—Forest Ethics, Greenpeace, Rainforest Action Network and the Sierra Club—working to protect British Columbia's Great Bear Rainforest, the largest temperate rainforest left on the planet. Steve, who was married earlier this year, has headed off to Los Angeles to pursue life, make art, and work on the art magazine *Cakewalk*.

In their stead we welcome new associate editor Kristie Reilly. A former *In These Times* intern, Kristie comes to us from the University of Chicago's *Astrophysical Journal* and *The Baffler*. A New Hampshire native, she attended St. John's College in Santa Fe and the University of Chicago, where she studied philosophy. And we welcome new assistant art director Seamus Holman, a Seattle native and recent Antioch College journalism graduate. In addition to helping design each issue of the magazine, he will be working to improve www.inthesetimes.com.

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Please keep your letter short and include your address and daytime phone number.

Terry LaBan



Stuck at the Border

Immigration reform is derailed by attacks

By Leon Lazaroff

NEW YORK—It didn't take long, recalls Nadia Marin-Molina, for the telephone to start ringing with reports of harassment by particularly vigilant people looking for anyone who appeared to be Muslim.

The calls, says Marin-Molina, executive director of the Workplace Project in Hempstead, New York, came from day laborers, mostly young men and women from Ecuador, El Salvador and Mexico who wait at street corners in towns on Long Island for contractors to offer work. Though they're not of Arab descent, in the days following the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, the customary drive-by harassments and police patrols monitoring the area's day laborers grew steadier and uglier. Sensing their safety could be at risk, immigrants began to stay in their homes.

"We realized pretty quickly that this anti-immigrant sentiment wouldn't just pertain to one group, that the consequences would ripple through all groups," Marin-Molina says. "It's an impact of fear—a feeling that if we speak up, what is going to happen to us?"

Though it still may be too early to judge the effect of the past month's events on immigration law reform as well as the public's image of immigrants, there is little doubt that priorities have changed. In Congress, the timetable for immigration reform has likely been set back six months or more. Nationally, immigration activists worry that all immigrants, or those assumed to be foreign-born, run the risk of being categorized as bothersome or even dangerous. "We are certainly concerned about there being a shift in the general public that would paint the entire immigrant community based on what a few villainous individu-

als were engaged in," says Arturo Rodriguez, executive director of the United Farm Workers.

Before the attacks, President George W. Bush had been urging the public to view undocumented immigrants as hard-working and conscientious rather than law-breakers resistant to assimilation. Free of the bellicose rantings of Pete Wilson and Pat Buchanan, immigration reform had seemed an issue that liberals as well as conservatives could embrace.

Mexican President Vicente Fox came to Washington in the week just before the attacks to implore U.S. lawmakers to pass legislation that would recognize the integral role of undocumented workers in the U.S. economy. Perhaps motivated by the hope of winning over Latino voters, and surprising many, Bush eagerly concurred. Though the

country, at press time it was likely that the Bush administration would secure measures allowing immigrants suspected of terrorism to be detained without charges for a week. (Ashcroft wanted the right to detain noncitizens under suspicion indefinitely.)

Another Bush proposal that would have required schools to reveal information about foreign students to investigators was nixed, though the number of student visas is sure to be curtailed and background checks significantly increased.

Anti-immigration groups seized upon the attacks. In a statement released just hours after the planes hit the Twin Towers, the Washington-based Federation for American Immigration Reform argued that "the nation's defense against terrorism has been seriously eroded by the efforts of open-borders advocates, and the innocent victims of today's terrorist attacks have paid the price."

The public's fear of terrorism will have to be weighed into any future package of immigration reform proposals. Angela Kelley, deputy director of the National Immigration Forum, says concessions to the new political realities do not necessarily have to impede measures that would reunite immigrant families, increase wages for farmworkers or make it easier for longtime undocumented workers to become legal. "Stopping terrorism is really about better human intelligence, better informa-

tion sharing, better technology," Kelley says. "It's about knowing the whereabouts of people on a watch list and having staff that are experienced at spotting fake documents. I don't think any of that is unreasonable."

As before, the future of immigration reform may depend largely on the strength of the economy. The suggestion that the supply of workers would be increased at a time of heightened unemployment would likely hurt the chances for an expanded legalization program. Fear of terrorism, though, is sure to shape both the machinations of immigration politics as well as the organizing efforts of those who work most closely with undocumented immigrants. ■



Ontario officials suspected this fire at a Hindu temple in Hamilton was set in reaction to the September 11 terrorist attacks.

specifics of legislation had yet to be determined, civil rights, labor and religious groups were cautiously hopeful that a full-scale legalization program for the undocumented was in the offing.

All that changed, of course, on September 11. Rather than crafting ways that the Immigration and Naturalization Service might plan programs to legalize many of the country's more than 8 million undocumented immigrants, the INS has since been told it can take "an additional reasonable period of time" deciding whether to continue to detain a non-U.S. citizen suspected of committing a crime. Instead of enacting laws that might give noncitizens the same workplace rights as those born in the

New York Times Blacklists Freelancers

It was bad enough when the *New York Times* told freelance writers that if they didn't sign all-rights contracts, their articles would be pulled from the paper's Lexis-Nexis archives. The Supreme Court ruled in June that the newspaper owed authors for the articles it had sold to Lexis-Nexis without their permission. But now the *Times* is blacklisting the 11 original defendants in the *Tasini vs. The New York Times Co.* case.

"We have tried to negotiate with the *New York Times*," National Writers Union President Jonathan Tasini said in a statement. "In response, the newspaper tried to scare writers. ... Now, it appears that ... the *Times* [has] decided to take us back to the darkest days of the McCarthy era. To paraphrase what was said then, have the *Times* and its publisher, Arthur Sulzberger, no shame?"

The NWU is urging writers not to sign all-rights contracts, a now-widespread form of work-for-hire that forces writers to give up all copyrights.

In an internal memo, Michaela Williams, the *Times*' director of editorial contracts, wrote in September: "Folks: I'm sending this around again, just in case it didn't reach you earlier. ... Our lawyers recommend that the newspaper not engage any of the below named plaintiffs to write for the newspaper."

The list includes Tasini and former *In These Times* contributors Barbara Garson and Daniel Lazare, as well as two defendants in a pending Authors Guild case. Tasini received the list after the e-mail was forwarded to him by a recipient at the *Times*.

The *Times* insisted the embargo was a legal strategy, not a blacklist.

Kristie Reilly

Najjar was executive director of the World and Islam Studies Enterprise, an academic research center on Islam formerly associated with the University of South Florida in Tampa. In 1995, a series of articles appeared in the *Tampa Tribune* attempting to link the center to terrorists, specifically to the Palestinian group Islamic Jihad. The articles were later debunked by a number of sources, including the *Miami Herald*, amid charges they had used biased sources and unsubstantiated evidence to fabricate a case against Al-Najjar.

Nevertheless, Al-Najjar was arrested in 1997. "We were provided with only a one-sentence unclassified summary" of the classified evidence used to obtain the arrest warrant and to deny bail, Al-Najjar says. "My lawyers tried hard to find some way to defend me, but we didn't have any access to this information. There was no due process."

Al-Najjar was held for 15 months before receiving a ruling from the Board

of Immigration Appeals upholding the Florida immigration court's decision to detain him. In May 2000, a Florida judge declared INS treatment of Al-Najjar unconstitutional under the due process clause and the First Amendment. She "ordered that I should be afforded first a public evidence hearing," Al-Najjar says.

In a 56-page ruling after two weeks of public hearings, the same immigration judge who originally ordered Al-Najjar's detention dismissed the INS allegations as unfounded. After three and a half years of imprisonment based on unfounded charges, no apologies and no compensation have been offered to Al-Najjar and his family.

Local and national groups have called for an end to the use of secret evidence, and a bill to that effect (HR 1266) introduced in the House earlier this year attracted 100 co-signers. But the bill's prospects are dubious; the Bush administration is now pushing a bill that would allow the government more power to detain and deport immigrants without charging them with a crime. ■



Mazen Al-Najjar

Secret Keepers

Should the government be allowed to hold immigrants on "classified" charges?

By Anthony Arnove

As many immigrants fear for their safety after the attacks of September 11, powers granted to federal prosecutors following the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing are still being used to imprison immigrants based on secret evidence and "classified" charges.

Mazen Al-Najjar, a 44-year-old Palestinian born in Gaza City, is one of more than two dozen immigrants detained using secret evidence in the past five years. Al-Najjar was incarcerated in Florida for three years and seven months on classified evidence that he and his lawyers were never allowed to see.

Al-Najjar finally was freed in December 2000 after Attorney General Janet Reno determined there was no basis for holding him, but the Immigration and Naturalization Service and FBI continue to press their case in an effort to return him to prison. Al-Najjar's case could potentially go to the Supreme Court, says his lawyer, Georgetown Professor David Cole, who

has handled (and won) 13 classified evidence cases. "They're taking the position that they have the authority to do what they did to Mazen and nothing they did is wrong," Cole says.

Under the Immigration and Nationality Act and the expanded powers provided in the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, a number of political asylum seekers and immigrants have found themselves, like Al-Najjar, in a Kafkaesque situation in which they have been detained indefinitely on classified evidence that is not made available to them or their lawyers. The government used secret evidence in a case against eight Palestinians in Los Angeles, and Harpal Singh Cheema, a Sikh from India, remains in jail based on secret evidence.

In secret evidence cases, former director of the CIA James Woolsey testified before the Senate, INS procedure "is to collect rumors and unfounded allegations, not investigate them, submit them [privately] to the immigration judge, and then demand that the individual in question be held [as] a threat to national security if he does not succeed in refuting the charges of which he is unaware."

The case against Al-Najjar seems largely based on guilt by association. Al-

Shell Game

Citibank attacks money-laundering regulations

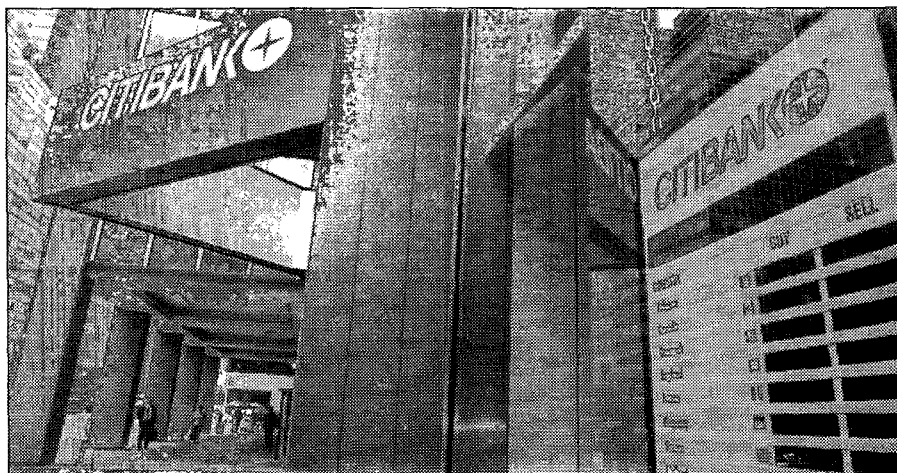
By Lucy Komisar

Citibank is leading a fight by American banks to gut the anti-money-laundering laws currently being considered in Congress—laws that could significantly change the way banks do business for their wealthiest clients.

Citibank is seeking an exception to a proposed ban on doing business with shell banks, which have no physical presence and are situated “virtually” in offshore zones to avoid taxes and regulations. The banks are used to hide and launder perhaps billions of dollars a year. “Citibank is the only major bank in the United States that admits to having shell banks as clients, and it doesn’t want to give them up,” says a congressional staffer, who spoke on condition of anonymity. “Citibank is the most active bank trying to gut the ban on shell banks, and the American Bankers Association is trotting behind them.”

In an example of what having friends at the top can do for the financial services lobby, which is one of the largest and most powerful in Congress, Richard Small, director of Citibank’s anti-money-laundering department, lobbied the House and Senate committees to insert an exception that would allow U.S. banks to work with shell financial services companies, the staffer says. The clause was deleted in the House version, but at press time the Senate committee had yet to vote on the bill. “The House bill [makes it] look like they’re banning shell banks, but the exception makes the ban meaningless,” explains the staffer.

Small, who until recently headed the anti-money-laundering office of the Federal Reserve, declined to comment. But a Citibank spokesman says that the banking conglomerate supports the legislation and that it is “working with U.S. government and industry associates to determine the most effective means to prevent the banking system worldwide from being used for criminal purposes.”



MARIO TAMAGGETTY IMAGES

Offshore banking has helped Citibank clients hide millions.

Yet as recently as May, Citibank was forced to close two accounts held in its own offshore banks in the Bahamas and the Cayman Islands after a Senate investigation revealed that several million dollars in drug money had been laundered through the accounts. Both the accounts were from shell banks affiliated with financial services companies, for which Small was seeking the exception, and one with a securities firm linked to drug money. Citibank “closed the accounts of the two [banks] we reported on,” the staffer said, “but they have others.”

The American Banking Association has been fighting along with Citibank to delete the “due diligence” clause in the legislation, which would require that banks make a concerted effort to verify the source of foreign funds they transfer or receive. Peter Blocklin, senior federal legislative representative for the ABA, told the *New York Times* that banks were “already doing due diligence.”

But a congressional report released in March of this year said the opposite, charging four of the largest U.S. banks—Citibank, J.P. Morgan, Bank of America and First Union—with having inadequate money-laundering controls and weak due diligence practices. Sen. Carl Levin (D-Michigan), co-sponsor of the Senate bill, says the banks are in fact “asleep at the switch.”

About \$500 billion—or half of the global total—is laundered through U.S. banks each year, according to the Bureau of National Affairs. Jack Blum, a Washington lawyer who co-authored a U.N. report on offshore banking, esti-

mates that \$70 billion in taxes is lost every year when the richest U.S. taxpayers hide money in offshore banking accounts. Regardless, Republicans historically have been vehemently opposed to regulating money in U.S. banks, and the bills being considered are a radical about-face, brought about by the September 11 attacks as part of Bush’s anti-terrorism plan.

In an area where the United States has been lax for decades, the proposed legislation is reasonably strong. But although the money-laundering controls are a significant step forward, they still ignore many of the problems in the U.S. banking and money-transfer system. The legislation permits, but does not require, the Treasury Department to stop U.S. banks from working with banks in countries where secrecy laws prevent cooperation with investigators (countries like the Cayman Islands and the Bahamas). It asks only a quick study of imposing regulations on investment companies and hedge funds, which are not currently regulated at all. And the Bush administration is not requiring suspicious activity reports (which banks are currently required to file for suspicious transactions over \$10,000) from casinos, money transmitters like Western Union and stock brokerages—all of which, because they consistently handle large amounts of cash, are prime targets for money launderers.

Until the United States closes these gaping loopholes in the system, the flow of illegal funds from the world’s wealthiest, and the world’s wealthiest criminals, will continue. ■

Coal Miners' Slaughter

Could an Alabama disaster have been prevented?

By Ken Ward Jr.

Thirteen miners died in an explosion at a Jim Walter Resources coal mine in Brookwood, Alabama in September. Though the disaster near Tuscaloosa got little national attention, it was the worst U.S. coal mining disaster in nearly two decades.

The company won't make a statement about the cause of the explosions until an investigation has been completed, but it is facing serious pressure. "We've had everyone in the world trying to run us through the grinder," complains Jim Walter spokesman Dennis Hall.

The exact cause of the explosion is still unknown, but there are indications of a long history of negligence. The company knew

of dangers and violated safety rules, while regulators gave the operator little but a slap on the wrist. There were three "unplanned ignitions"—sparks or fires that warn of explosive methane buildups—in the Blue Creek No. 5 mine in the month before the September 23 disaster, and the company has been cited by the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) more than 250 times in the past three years for allowing combustible materials—such as methane, coal dust or oily rags—to build up underground.

All coal mines contain some methane, an explosive gas that is released as miners and machines dig into the earth. Alabama coal mines are considered particularly susceptible to such accidents, because coal deposits there contain unusually high concentrations of the gas. Federal mine safety laws require underground mine operators to develop detailed ventilation plans to remove explosive methane and to funnel fresh air into their mines. Under federal law, coal companies must also keep their mines clear of coal dust. This dust not only

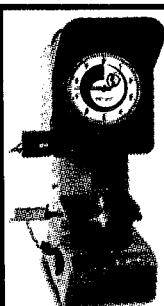


ROBERT GUMPERT

It's a dangerous job...

ignites, causing fires and explosions, but it also causes black lung disease.

But on September 20, just three days before the accident, MSHA inspectors cited the mine for four violations of the rule mandating cleanup of coal dust and other combustible materials. The company had been cited for violating that same rule nine times in the previous month. On August 21, August 22, August 29 and September 4, the com-



Appall-o-Meter

By Dave Mulcahey

Operation Infinite Spin 5.4

Who knew that the Voice of America was part of some anti-patriotic liberal conspiracy? You might think the worldwide radio service, a holdover from the Cold War, still piped Yankee propaganda to the oppressed in remote parts of the world. Far from it, according to some critics. As the *New York Times* reports, some political refugees from Afghanistan have started referring to VOA as the Voice of Taliban.

Their beef? The VOA aired an interview with Mullah Mohammed Omar, the Taliban leader. The deeper problem, though, is that the radio service has tried to move beyond mere propaganda to provide something like objective, high-quality news reporting.

In early October, the Bush administration replaced VOA's director with a more reliable conservative, but many right-wingers remain doubtful that he will bring the service on board with Operation Enduring Freedom. Objectivity, apparently, has no role in the psy-ops we have planned for the Middle East. The *Times* quoted Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Florida), chairwoman of

the House Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, thus on VOA programming: "If we turn this into a PBS documentary—seesawing on every side and being balanced—that's not promoting democracy."

The Frugality of Evil 4.2

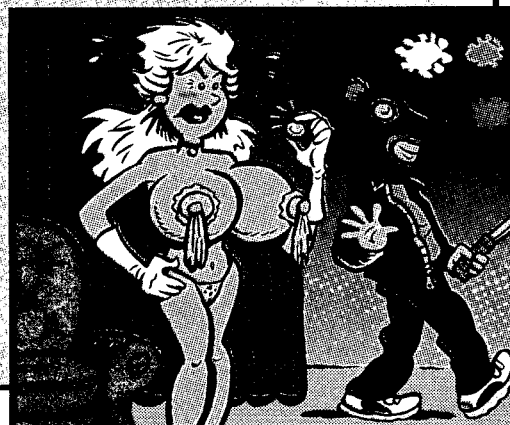
For all their well-documented courtesy to landlords, rental clerks and the like, the suicide hijackers were none too generous with a certain sort of service personnel. Just one look at Marwan Al-Shehhi was enough to know that he was cheap, maintains Samantha, a dancer at the Olympic Garden Topless Cabaret in Las Vegas.

"Some big-man terrorist, huh?" Samantha fumed to a reporter from the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "He spent about \$20 for a quick dance and didn't tip more."

"I'm glad he's dead with the rest of them," she added, "and I don't like feeling something like that. But he wasn't just a bad tipper—he killed people."

Towering Banality 2.9

Jihadsters buying lap dances in Vegas. Ironic, sure, but not exactly eccentric behavior, even for religious zealots. I mean, it's nothing like, say, plunking down \$50 to see *Puppetry of the Penis*, the two-man show currently running at the John Houseman Theater in New York. This spectacle features a couple of Australian gentleman bending and stretching their johnsons into various "installations"—or, as a reviewer for the *New York Times* put it, "into shapes more often associated with balloon animals." The show is also playing to packed houses in Canada and Britain.



TERRY LABAN

pany was cited for a total of eight violations of the same rule. Since January 1999, MSHA has cited the No. 5 mine for a total of 262 violations of the rule, according to agency records.

Over the past six years, inspectors have also cited Jim Walter for mine safety violations that led to the deaths of four workers. Reports on three of those have been completed, and the company was fined just \$14,000—less than \$5,000 for each of the three miners killed in the accidents.

Investigations by MSHA often take months or even years to complete, so the “facts” may not come for a long time. But UMW member Mike Boyd, whose brother died in the explosions, warned the company six weeks before the accident, when workers hit pockets of methane advancing through a mine tunnel. “I raised total hell with all of Jim Walter’s management,” Boyd told the *Tuscaloosa News*. “It’s like it fell on deaf ears.”

Rather than shutting down production when gas concentrations reached dangerous levels, as government rules mandate, the company kept miners working.

The accident in Alabama was the worst since 1984, when 27 workers died in a Utah mine fire. But deaths continue every year in mining states, in fatalities that get less attention from the media and the public. “If the 10 miners who have been killed so far this year in West Virginia had been killed all in one bunch, there would have been an outcry,” said J. Davitt McAteer, head of MSHA during the Clinton administration. “But when they die one at a time, sadly, there is no outcry.”

At the same time, miners continue to die a horrible, choking death from black lung disease. Every year, about 1,500 miners or former miners die because they breathed too much coal dust on the job, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Government officials know there is widespread cheating by coal companies on the tests used to measure coal dust levels underground. But proposals for the government to take over dust sampling, and to reduce the allowable dust levels, have been thwarted after industry opposition. Earlier this year, one of the Bush administration’s first acts in office was an attempt to revoke a Clinton regulation that makes it easier for miners to receive federal dis-

ability benefits for black lung disease. Only after an outcry from the United Mine Workers and several powerful members of Congress did Bush back off.

“We could be mining coal in this country with a minimum of fatalities,” McAteer says. “But it’s considered an acceptable cost of doing business. If the public at large said that this was unacceptable, then things would change.” ■

Ken Ward is an investigative reporter at the Charleston Gazette.

Time Is Tight

The cutoff is starting for welfare recipients

By Hank Hoffman

NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT—Lynnette Moore was upset. Listening to Connecticut social services officials discuss the pending cutoff of cash assistance for welfare recipients who have reached the federal five-year lifetime limit, all Moore heard was “just a lot of words.”

In Connecticut, 240 families—with an average of three children—received their last check on September 1. Approximately 80 families per month will be cut off over the next four months, in the first wave of cuts resulting from the federal limits. Moore, a 40-year-old mother with six dependent children, will get her last check on December 1.

“The people that make these decisions are not affected by it so they don’t know what it’s like to find out you’re going to wake up on October 1 without any cash benefits,” says Moore, an activist with Mothers for Justice, a local welfare-rights organization affiliated with the national network Grass Roots Organizing for Welfare Leadership

(GROWL). “They say they’re going to increase food stamps. But how can you give the landlord food stamps? Or the electric company?”

Federal welfare reform, enacted in 1996, gave states wide latitude in setting time limits or even not having time limits at all. But the law set a five-year lifetime limit—regardless of changes in the broader economy such as recessions—on federal reimbursement for assistance to adult clients.

Until this year, time limits have been a minor factor in caseload reduction in most states. Of the 2.5 million client reduction in the national welfare caseload since 1996, only about 100,000 families were terminated for reaching time limits. With welfare reform reaching its fifth anniversary and a rapidly contracting economy, this may change.

“The big issue around time limits isn’t how many families get cut off the first month time limits hits. It’s the fact that these are lifetime time limits and the number of families ineligible for assistance will steadily grow over time,” says Mark Greenberg, senior attorney with the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) in Washington. “It’s probably

Blocked at the Courthouse

In a victory for abortion rights, on October 2 a Chicago federal appeals court upheld a 1998 ruling convicting anti-abortion groups, including Operation Rescue and the Pro-Life Action League, of violating an anti-racketeering law.

The Supreme Court ruled in 1994 that the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act, originally intended to help prosecute organized crime, could be interpreted more broadly. National Organization for Women lawyers argued at the time that the anti-abortion leaders conspired to plan national criminal strategies, thus meeting the criterion for prosecution under RICO. They were then able to link the groups to specific acts of violence.

The 7th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the previous ruling that activists had engaged in a criminal pattern of behavior, stating that protesters had “trespassed on clinic property and blocked access to the clinics with their bodies, including at times chaining themselves in the doorways of clinics or to operating tables,” and “destroyed clinic property [and] physically assaulted clinic staff and patients.”

Following the 1998 ruling, the pro-life groups were barred from trespassing, blockading or behaving in a violent way at abortion clinics for 10 years. They plan to appeal. Meanwhile, “we intend to keep right on” using these tactics, says Pro-Life Action League director Joseph Scheidler. **K.R.**

reasonable to expect it will affect tens of thousands of families in the first year."

Reaching the five-year cutoff date, Connecticut faced a choice: appropriate state money for assistance and seek federal funds under a hardship rule that allows the exemption of 20 percent of the caseload from the five-year time limit—or cut clients adrift. The administration of conservative Gov. John Rowland and the Democratic-controlled legislature chose the latter course. One of the wealthiest states in the country, Connecticut—which has reduced its caseload from 58,000 in 1996 to 25,000—toughened the state policy on extensions. With few exceptions, clients will get no more than five years of cash assistance, and about half will have to leave the rolls by 39 months. The rest will have to demonstrate two or more barriers to employment—such as lack of transportation or disability—to get extensions past that.

Other states have made different choices. Michigan and Vermont don't have time limits at all. They decided to use state funds to assist those families that pass the five-year federal cutoff. Some states cut assistance to a parent who reaches the time limit but continue assistance for children. Illinois doesn't enforce time limits against families where the parent is working 30 hours or more but earns so little that they still qualify for assistance. On the other hand, many states have time limits even stricter than the feds, although some of those limits allow for extensions.

Welfare reform proponents' goal was to move recipients from welfare to work. But success has been measured not by the degree to which poor people have escaped poverty and achieved economic self-sufficiency, but by the drastic slashing of caseloads. Progressive anti-poverty activists hope to change that. They want to use next year's battle over the reauthorization of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), as welfare is now known, to change the priorities of TANF from reducing caseloads to reducing poverty.



Lynnette Moore with three of her children.

Dan HoSang, an organizer for the Oakland-based Center for Third World Organizing who works with GROWL, says progressives need to "articulate a new vision of what welfare should be." Although the political climate is not propitious, HoSang would "dramatically open welfare as a program for both what we call low-wage and no-wage workers and say this is where folks get education, training, cash support and a broad number of supports to help families."

This may not be as utopian as it sounds. According to Deepak Bhargava, director of the National Campaign for Jobs and Income Support, the theme of poverty reduction "has already seeped through a large part of the political community in Washington." Bhargava notes that Sen. Charles Schumer (D-New York) and Rep. Pete Stark (D-California) have introduced bills that would reward states for reductions in the poverty rate. Even Sens. John Breaux (D-Louisiana) and Olympia Snowe (R-Maine) have expressed interest in the concept, Bhargava says.

If time limits can't be eliminated, advocates hope to work against their most onerous features. CLASP's Greenberg says exempting working families from time limits and gaining more flexibility to deal with an economic downturn will be high on the agenda. ■

Hank Hoffman is a contributing writer for the New Haven Advocate.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

WE HERE AT ACTION MCNEWS FEEL IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND WHAT COULD POSSIBLY DRIVE THESE TERRORISTS TO COMMIT SUCH MONSTROUS CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY--



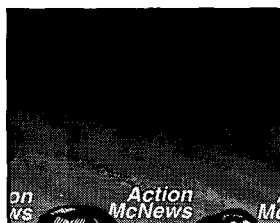
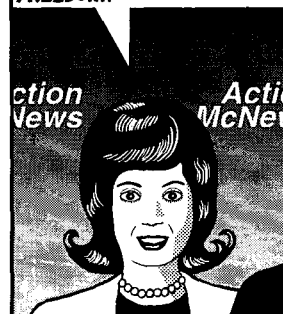
--TO EXAMINE THEIR BELIEFS AND PUT THEM IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT SO THAT WE MIGHT AVOID A REPEAT OF THE TERRIBLE EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 11.



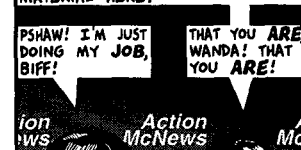
THAT'S WHY WE'VE ASKED CORRESPONDENT WANDA McDONALD TO GIVE US AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT THE MOTIVES BEHIND THESE SEEMINGLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE ACTS. WANDA?



THANKS, BIFF! YOU SEE, IT'S LIKE THIS: THE TERRORISTS HATE FREEDOM.



WELL, THANKS FOR THAT EYE-OPENING REPORT, WANDA! I THINK WE MIGHT BE TALKING PULITZER MATERIAL HERE!



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Trading on Terrorism

By Naomi Klein

There are many contenders for Biggest Political Opportunist since the September 11 atrocities. Politicians ramming through life-changing laws while voters are still mourning; corporations diving for public cash; pundits accusing their opponents of treason.

Yet amid the chorus of Draconian proposals and McCarthyite threats, one voice of opportunism still stands out. That voice belongs to Robyn A. Mazer. Mazer is using September 11 to call for an international crackdown on counterfeit T-shirts.

Not surprisingly, Mazer is a trade lawyer in Washington. Even less surprising, she specializes in trade laws that protect the single largest U.S. export: copyright. That's music, movies, logos, seed patents, software and much more. Trade Related Intellectual Property rights (TRIPs) is one of the most controversial side-agreements in the runup to November's World Trade Organization meeting in Qatar. It is the battleground for disputes ranging from China's thriving market in knockoff Britney Spears CDs to Brazil's right to disseminate free generic AIDS drugs.

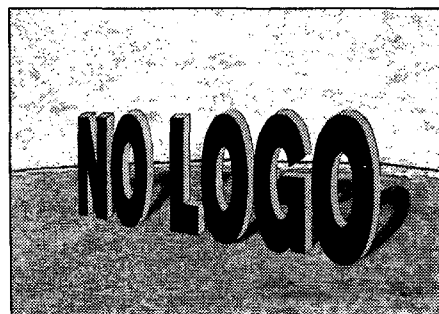
American multinationals are desperate to gain access to these large markets for their products—but they want protection. Many poor countries, meanwhile, say TRIPs cost millions to police, while strangleholds on intellectual property drive up costs for local industries and consumers.

What does any of this trade wrangling have to do with terrorism? Nothing, absolutely nothing. Unless, of course, you ask Mazer, who published an article September 30 in the *Washington Post* headlined, "From T-Shirts to Terrorism: That Fake Nike Swoosh May Be Helping Fund bin Laden's Network."

She writes: "Recent developments suggest that many of the governments suspected of supporting al-Qaeda are also

promoting, being corrupted by, or at the very least ignoring highly lucrative trafficking in counterfeit and pirated products capable of generating huge money flows to terrorists."

"Suggest," "suspected of," "at the very least," "capable of"—that's a lot of hedging for one sentence, especially



from someone who used to work in the Justice Department. But the conclusion is unambiguous: You either enforce TRIPs, or you are with the terrorists. Welcome to the brave new world of trade negotiations, where every arcane clause is infused with the self-righteousness of a holy war.

Mazer's political opportunism raises some interesting contradictions. U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick has been using September 11 for another opportunistic goal: to secure "fast track" trade negotiating power for President Bush. According to Zoellick, trade "promotes the values at the heart of this protracted struggle."

What do new trade deals have to do with fighting terrorism? Well, the terrorists, we are told again and again, hate America precisely because they hate consumerism: McDonald's and Nike and capitalism—you know, freedom. To trade is therefore to defy their ascetic crusade, to spread the very products they loathe.

But wait a minute: What about all those fakes Mazer says are bankrolling terror? In Afghanistan, she claims, you

can buy "T-shirts bearing counterfeit Nike logos and glorifying bin Laden as 'The great *mujahid* of Islam.'" It seems we are facing a much more complicated scenario than the facile dichotomy of a consumerist McWorld versus an anti-consumerist *jihad*. In fact, if Mazer is correct, not only are the two worlds thoroughly enmeshed, the imagery of McWorld is being used to finance *jihad*.

Maybe a little complexity isn't so bad. Part of the disorientation many Americans now face has to do with the inflated and oversimplified role consumerism plays in the American narrative. To buy is to be. To buy is to love. To buy is to vote. People outside the United States who want Nikes—even counterfeit Nikes—must want to be American, must love America, must in some way be voting for everything America stands for.

This has been the fairy tale since 1989, when the same media companies now bringing us America's War on Terrorism proclaimed that their television satellites would topple dictatorships the world over. Consumers would lead, inevitably, to freedom. But all these easy narratives are breaking down: Authoritarianism co-exists with consumerism, desire for American products is mixed with rage at inequality.

Nothing exposes these contradictions more clearly than the trade wars raging over "fake" goods. Pirating thrives in the deep craters of global inequality, when demand for consumer goods is decades ahead of purchasing power. It thrives in China, where goods made in export-only sweatshops are sold for more than factory workers make in a month. It thrives in Africa, where the price of AIDS drugs is a cruel joke. It thrives in Brazil, where CD pirates are feted as musical Robin Hoods.

Complexity is lousy for opportunism. But it does help us get closer to the truth, even if it means sorting through a lot of fakes. ■



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Sandinista Salvation?

Old adversaries make a bid for power in the new Nicaragua

By Rick Rockwell, Noreene Janus and Kristin Neubauer

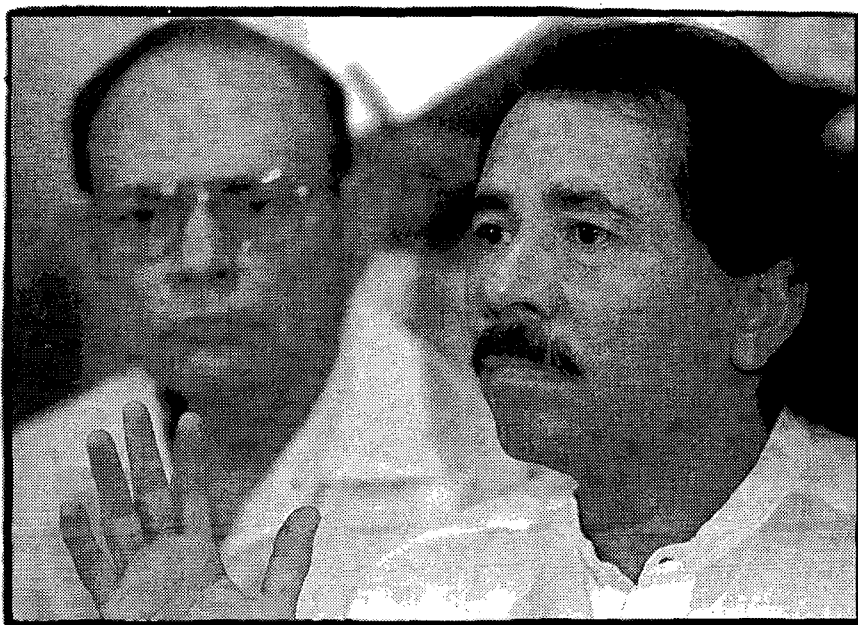
Digging for the truth about the Nicaraguan elections means stirring up the bones of the past. Literally. During the summer, excavations at an old jail site near Managua uncovered fossilized bones. Leaping to conclusions, authorities announced they had found the remains of people tortured and killed by the Sandinistas. The jail was used by the Sandinistas to hold political prisoners after the 1979 revolution, which ended 43 years of dictatorial rule by the Somoza family. But the Sandinistas eventually abandoned the site and filled in the underground cells. When the Sandinistas were voted out of power in 1990, the site was forgotten.

But with the Sandinistas leading in the early polls for the November 4 election, the story of the discovery became a political bombshell. Newspapers splashed the story across their front pages. As usual in Nicaragua, the truth is not always what it seems at first glance. Someone must always dig a little deeper. Weeks after the initial accusations, an archaeologist gave a preliminary report: The bones were from a pre-Columbian grave site, perhaps more than 700 years old.

The story seems to illustrate that the past is always present in Nicaragua, especially when a change of power could be imminent. Many of the central characters of the '80s, when the country was one of the Cold War's main theaters of operation, are still key players in the political process.

Consider Enrique Bolaños, the presidential candidate of Nicaragua's Constitutionalist Liberal Party (PLC by its Spanish acronym), the party that backed the Somoza regimes for decades. Bolaños is a conservative businessman who was jailed briefly for his views after the revolution. A former vice president, Bolaños is closely tied to current President Arnoldo Alemán and his ultra-right-wing backers.

"We have provided peace and a better infrastructure," Bolaños crowed during a trip to Washington this summer about the accomplishments of the PLC in the past five years. Forced to clean up after the devastation of Hurricane Mitch and dis-



Tomas Borge and Daniel Ortega see themselves as "the only way to help the poor."

tracted by the drought, Bolaños said his election would begin to bring economic benefits to the typical Nicaraguan. "We need to return to the prosperity of 1978," he said, never mentioning that this was the last year of the Somoza dictatorship.

In Washington, Bolaños made an appearance at the International Republican Institute, seeking support for his candidacy. Adolfo Calero, the leader of the Contras during the '80s, led Bolaños into a meeting room filled with retired military officers and State Department representatives. Now a member of Nicaragua's National Assembly, Calero walked with a limp, supported by a cane. But Bolaños, a septuagenarian, strode briskly to the podium and launched into a classic Cold War speech—denouncing his primary opponents in the elections, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

"The Sandinistas are again threatening the stability of Nicaragua, Central America and the Caribbean," Bolaños thundered. He accused the FSLN of accepting support from Libya and Cuba in its efforts to regain power. Bolaños trotted out the usual suspects for the American audience, linking his opponents to "rogue states" and communist nations.

Brothers Daniel and Humberto Ortega back in the days when the FSLN held power. Much of the voting-age population were children the last time the Sandinistas ran Nicaragua.

With similar rhetorical flourishes, the United States funneled billions of dollars of support—legal, illegal and covert—to the Contras in the '80s. This was all part of the Reagan-era strategy to keep the dominoes of Communism from falling in Central America. During that time, the United States financed counter-revolutionary forces operating from Honduras and Costa Rica against the FSLN. Economic sanctions destroyed Nicaragua's economy. After more than a decade of struggle, Nicaraguan voters turned the Sandinistas out of power in 1990.

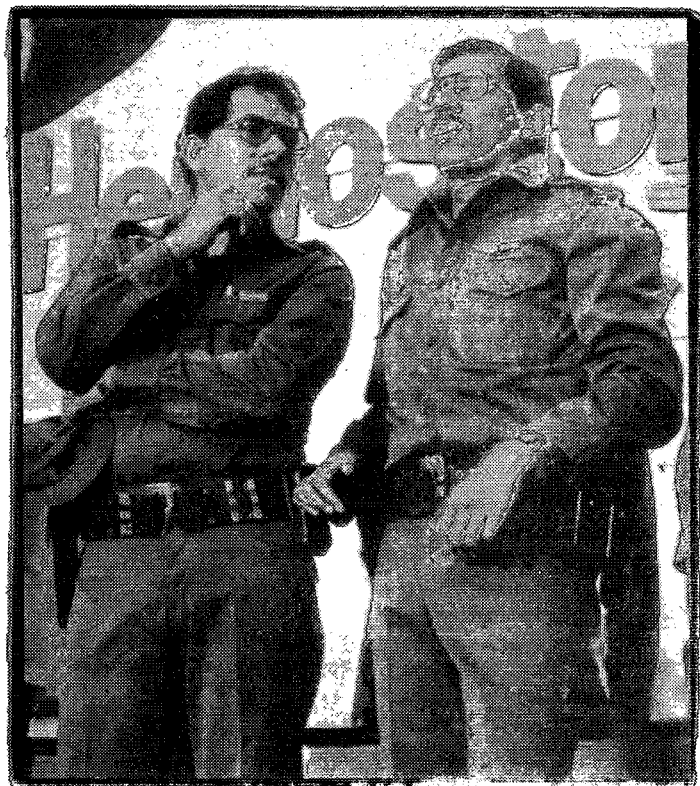
Now, more than a decade later, the man who lost that election, former President Daniel Ortega, wants his job back. He is backed by many of the *commandantes* who made up the FSLN directorate during the war years, including Bayardo Arce and Tomas Borge. Arce and Borge are at the top of the Sandinistas' slate for the National Assembly. "We're changing. We have learned from our mistakes," says Borge, the only surviving member of the original FSLN directorate of the early '60s. "The right-wing in the United States is organizing along with the Liberal Party here and other sectors of society like the newspaper, *La Prensa*. They're conspiring to make Bolaños the next president."

This year, after falling behind in early polls, the PLC launched an expensive media campaign, saturating the radio and television airwaves with Bolaños commercials. Slowly, Bolaños overtook Ortega, and now leads him by two points in the latest polls. However, 20 percent of the voters remain undecided. Nicaraguans seem to be saying that both major parties offer unacceptable choices.

"He may practice nepotism and other forms of corruption, but he's probably not a dictator."

Despite the old campaign slogans and familiar political war-horses, the Nicaragua of 2001 is different from when the Sandinistas were fighting to stay in power. A large swath of the population were children the last time the Sandinistas ran the country. Today, as much as 80 percent of the population is unemployed or underemployed. The United Nations ranks Nicaragua as the nation with the second highest rate of poverty in the hemisphere, surpassed only by Haiti. In addition, the country is reeling from a two-year-old drought and the collapse of world prices for coffee, one of its principal export crops.

"The government is corrupt and lies," says Oscar Montes, one of the typical Nicaraguans Bolaños wants to reach. Sitting outside a ramshackle office building in downtown



Managua, Montes, a veteran of the revolution and the Contra war, spoke angrily about the return of the exiles from Miami after the Sandinistas lost power. In his opinion, they marked the return of the country's oligarchy and the end of attempts to reach out to the poor.

Thin, brown and bearded, Montes spoke waving his left arm. Wounded in the war years, his right arm was amputated below the elbow. "Why does the government have to lie to us?" he asks. "The bones story is an example. They are making up stories about the Sandinistas. Why are they asking tough questions of Daniel and the Sandinistas when they should be questioning real criminals like the president?"

Indeed, the Alemán government has become one of the major issues in the campaign. Several members of Alemán's administration have been implicated in major corruption scandals. The head of the Nicaraguan tax agency, Byron Jerez, was forced out of office after conducting shady procurement deals that had the government subcontracting work through his brother's firm in Miami; and an audit showed that the tax agency was missing \$200,000 from its budget, money that disappeared in an internal government transfer of funds.

In another case, the Nicaraguan media turned up allegations of bid-rigging in reconstruction after Hurricane Mitch by a firm owned by friends of Alemán. The president, who defeated Ortega in the 1996 election, also has been accused of using government funds to improve his own property. In one case, the government paved a 12-mile stretch of road outside Managua to reach an isolated ranch belonging to the president. "He is authoritarian, but he is not like Somoza," Borge concedes. "He may practice nepotism and other forms of corruption, but he's probably not a dictator."

Nevertheless, Nicaragua will not be rid of Alemán with this election. Last year, the Sandinistas signed a political pact

with the president designed to give the FSLN a better chance of winning the election. The pact limited the participation of minor parties, guaranteeing that Sandinista splinter groups could not organize against Ortega. As a result, only three parties are competing in the 2001 election. (Nicaragua's Conservative Party is polling in single digits.)

As part of the deal, Alemán gets a permanent seat in the National Assembly. If the PLC wins the Assembly elections, Alemán intends to become the Assembly's president. And some political analysts believe if Bolaños wins the presidency, Alemán will still be pulling the strings. Bolaños scoffs at such a scenario. "He'll be just another congressman," the candidate says. "How much power can one congressman have compared to a president?"

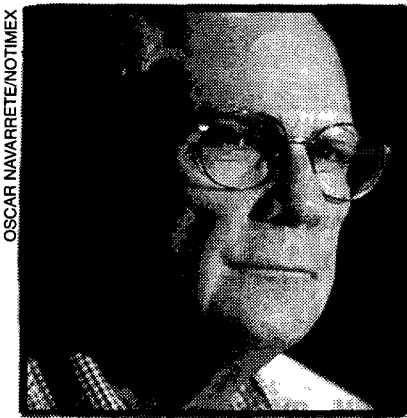
If Ortega loses, the political pact gives him a chance at an Assembly seat, too, because the seat goes to whoever gets second place in the presidential race. With seats in the Assembly, both Ortega and Alemán would be immune from prosecution for any past crimes. Although Alemán may have sought the position to dodge corruption charges, Ortega has his own problems. Two years ago, Ortega's stepdaughter, Zoilamerica Narváez, accused him of years of sexual abuse during the '80s, when she was a teen-ager and he was president. With immunity, Ortega would be guaranteed no repercussions from the case. The charges, which Ortega refuses to comment on, have been stalled in the judicial system, which is dominated by Sandinista judges.

And there is still the thorny issue of Sandinista property redistribution to settle. In the last days of the Sandinista era, property seized by the government from the Somozas and other prominent members of the PLC was given to leading members of the FSLN. Ranches, luxury homes, radio stations and motels were all part of the redistribution. But ordinary citizens saw it as another form of high-level corruption. Anger over the redistribution—known derisively as *la piñata*—may have cost Ortega the last election.

The Sandinistas have tried to shelter their damaged candidate by limiting his media exposure to only a few outlets. In interviews with publications like the *New York Times*, Ortega has stressed his renewed embrace of religion and Christianity. He declined to be interviewed for this article.

Instead, the FSLN offered Borge, former Interior Minister and chief censor. He has traded in the khaki uniform and stern visage that he wore in the '80s. Seated at a long table in his office, in casual dress with a baseball cap perched atop his head, Borge was surrounded by important symbols. On one side he was flanked by a red-and-black FSLN flag; on the other, a series of large crucifixes. Behind him stood a life-size photo of Borge's father with Augusto Sandino, the guerrilla leader who eluded the Marines in the '20s and became the patron saint of the FSLN.

Borge calls the sexual abuse charges against Ortega "regrettable." Borge also admits he himself is not well liked because he ordered censorship and political detention in the '80s. But



Enrique Bolaños

despite their public-image problems, he says the Sandinistas are the only salvation for the country. Given the corrupt nature of government, Borge says the FSLN would be the "only way to help the poor," adding that he sees the party as a bulwark against the forces of globalization. "This is not a poor country," he says with pride. "It is a country in poverty."

In an hour-long interview, Borge touches on a wide range of subjects, from the current election back to his time as a political prisoner during the Somoza era. In Borge's opinion, the situation cannot be assessed without taking the United States and its foreign policy into account. "We have a tendency to romanticize the revolution," he says. "But nevertheless, the history of this country is the history of U.S. intervention" and the fight against it.

The Bush administration has announced it will honor the results of a fair election, no matter who wins. However, following the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, the State Department recently tried to link the FSLN to guerrilla groups in Colombia and the Basque terrorist group ETA in Spain. The State Department also has dispatched Lino Gutierrez, former U.S. ambassador to Nicaragua, and other diplomats to Managua to make the case against the Sandinistas. Gutierrez told one audience that the Sandinistas belonged "in the dustbin of history."

"That rhetoric exists to capture votes in Florida," Borge says. Although he expects the United States to put some pressure on groups in Nicaragua to vote for the PLC, he predicts that Washington will not interfere with the Sandinistas if they win. However, he issues a challenge concerning future relations with Cuba: "We are friends with Fidel. There is absolute solidarity between us. He sent us teachers and doctors when we needed them. They can never put conditions on our communication with him. Never."

But that may be easier said than done in a new world order where the United States may be willing to use direct force against any state viewed as a threat. And many of Borge's old adversaries have returned to positions of power in the Bush administration. John Negroponte, who directed much of the aid to the Contras when he was ambassador to Honduras, is now the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. Elliott Abrams, who was pardoned for his crimes in the Iran-Contra scandal, is also back in the White House as a senior aide to the National Security Council. With their history of opposing the Sandinistas, future conflicts are likely.

Some Nicaraguans are concerned about this type of clash with the United States if the Sandinistas win. But Borge wants to assuage those fears. "We know we can maintain a relationship with the United States," he promises. "The Cold War has disappeared and so have the risks of the Cold War."

A visit to Nicaragua seems to say otherwise. The bones of the past are still rattling. ■

Rick Rockwell and Noreene Janus are co-authors of the forthcoming book *Media Power in Central America*. **Kristin Neubauer** recently returned to the United States after conducting research in Nicaragua and El Salvador as a Fulbright fellow.

Taking the Bait

Bush is giving bin Laden the war he wants

By Doug Ireland

In bombing Afghanistan, George W. Bush has handed Osama bin Laden a major victory. The strategic aim of the terrorists who struck the United States was to provoke Washington and its Western allies into sending planes and missiles against a lightly armed, utterly impoverished Muslim country—which already had the lowest caloric intake per person in the world, and where one in four children dies before the age of five—and then use the ensuing outrage to portray the conflict as a new crusade against Islam.

The ultimate goal of the terrorists always has been to destabilize the corrupt regimes of the Muslim world, beginning with Saudi Arabia and including Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan and, yes, Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority. A vast gulf separates the leaders of these regimes from their oppressed and penurious peoples, among whom primitive radical Islamist fundamentalism has been metastasizing at an alarming rate. The United States has reacted to September 11 just as bin Laden and his ilk hoped it would: Bush has given the radical mullahs a new weapon with which to inflame the Muslim street.

That the United States has dropped packaged meals with its bombs is a morally sickening joke. There are more than 5 million men, women and children starving in Afghanistan (not to mention another hungry 4 million in refugee camps), so 37,000 MREs a day is an airdrop in the bucket; high-altitude food drops are impossibly inaccurate and may not get to those who need them (may, indeed, be resupplying the Taliban); and the last time the United States dropped food from 30,000 feet—on the luckless Kurds in Northern Iraq a decade ago—the velocity of the packages was so great that they killed a number of their intended recipients. U.S. bombing increased Afghan famine by ending the U.N. food convoys over land. So while Bush's grand "humanitarian" gesture may make Americans feel less guilty about the collateral damage to civilians, no one in the Muslim world is fooled.

Our governing elites have learned little from our recent history. It was Bill Clinton's launching of cruise missiles against bin Laden and his hosts that elevated this odious *illuminé* to hero status for many of the Muslim world's dispossessed and those educated, middle-class fanatics who feed on their anger and distress. Each bomb dropped on Afghanistan—a country already in ruins after decades of invasion and civil war—recruits hundreds of new terrorists. By militarizing the campaign against terrorism, the United States has only confirmed the Manichean worldview so prevalent in much of Islam today.

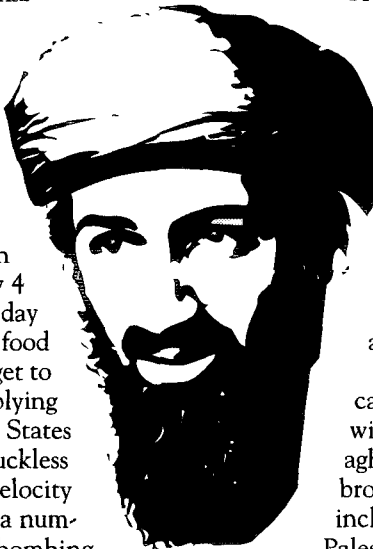
This view is that America has an overarching strategy including control of oil and gas in Central Asia, destruction of the

Iraqi regime, consolidation of America's grip on the Persian Gulf oilgarchies, and encroachment on Chinese and Russian spheres of influence. As Middle East scholar Farwaz Gerges wrote on the *New York Times* op-ed page after returning from a Beirut conference on how Arabs and Muslims should respond to the anti-terrorist campaign: "Many Muslims suspected the Bush administration of hoping to exploit this tragedy to settle old scores and assert American hegemony in the world."

The United States has already notified the United Nations that we may take military action against "other countries" in the campaign against terrorism. It has not escaped notice in the Muslim world that this administration is chock full of those who advocate a new war against Saddam Hussein's Iraq. (A 1998 open letter by Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz and others now in charge of American foreign policy called for precisely that.) And there are many in the Arab street who assume that a new war to eliminate Saddam is, in Bushthink, "Daddy's unfinished business." Moreover, there have been disturbing leaks from the Bushies that could presage an even greater escalation of the war—like the administration official who told the *New York Times* that the anti-terrorist campaign will fail if it doesn't also target Iran and Libya.

In their blinkered nationalism, Americans cannot comprehend how all this appears to a wide swath of the Muslim masses, and so are aghast at the anti-U.S., pro-bin Laden riots that broke out after the bombing of Afghanistan, including a firefight between Islamist radicals and Palestinian Authority forces in Gaza. (If Ariel Sharon—whose hard line is now being disowned by a raft of American Jewish community leaders and businessman—finds Arafat unpalatable as an interlocutor, wait until he gets a look at his successor.)

Just as the world has taken its first, sometimes faltering steps toward the genuine rule of international law with the war-crimes trials of Slobodan Milosevic and his henchmen, as well as Rwandan perpetrators of genocide, the United States has squandered an unparalleled opportunity to turn the worldwide horror at the slaughter of innocents on September 11 into concrete steps to extend law's global reach. By militarizing what is essentially a planetary law enforcement problem, Bush has undermined the goal of eliminating the hydra-headed terrorist networks. The bombing of Afghanistan is an enormous setback for the rule of law in the world. Escalations of this sort will only further exacerbate and fertilize the conditions in which terrorism flourishes. ■



Behind the Burka

Afghan women who fight the Taliban

By Raymond Whitaker

The sequence lasts only a minute. In a packed soccer stadium in Kabul, a woman in a blue burka—the head-to-toe covering that the Taliban force every woman to wear in Afghanistan—is taken from a vehicle and made to kneel on the edge of the penalty area. A Taliban fighter steps forward with an automatic rifle and shoots her in the back of the head, then pumps several more bullets into her prone body.

The death in 1999 of Zarmeena, a mother of seven who was said to have killed her husband as he slept, has been seen around the world, thanks to another woman who was in the crowd that day. At great risk to herself, she smuggled a digital video camera into the stadium under her burka and filmed the execution through the gauzy slit that permits the wearer a dim view of her surroundings. She was a member of RAWA, the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan, which has also filmed public amputations and the stoning of women.

RAWA is a feminist organization that has operated more or less undercover for more than 20 years in the face of hostility from the Communists, the *mujahedin*, Islamic fundamentalists, the Taliban and members' own families.

Feminism has never gained much of a foothold in Afghanistan. The virtual imprisonment into which the Taliban have shoved women all over the country—never appearing unveiled before any man outside their immediate family, never going out unescorted by a male relative, beaten for laughing or other “immodesty” in public, and certainly never going to a male doctor—has been the norm for centuries in the movement’s heartland, the rural Pashtun areas of southern Afghanistan.

Rulers there attempted to challenge these traditions at their peril. In the 1920s, King Amanullah, fired by Ataturk’s reforms in Turkey, called a *loya jirga*, or grand tribal assembly, at which he announced a program of sweeping modernization. The climax came when he condemned the subjugation of women, and called on his queen to remove her veil before the assembled elders. Shocked, they returned home to foment a revolt, which forced him to abdicate and flee Kabul in his Rolls Royce.

It was the ‘50s before any further attempt at liberalization was made, but unveiled women risked having acid thrown in their faces by Muslim zealots such as Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, later the leader of the most fiercely Islamist *mujahedin* faction in the war against the Soviet invaders. In some respects, Hekmatyar is more modern than the Taliban—he supports education for women, for example—but when RAWA was founded, he became one of its most bitter enemies, with fatal results for many of its members.

Ironically, the closest any Afghan woman ever came to enjoying Western-style social freedom was under the puppet governments installed by Moscow, which tried to give them their place in the new revolutionary order. People rarely believe me when I tell them that when I first visited Kabul in 1992, it was possible to see bare-headed female university students in jeans and make-up, smoking in the street. By the time I returned in 1994, the Communists had gone. The capital was ruled by northern-based *mujahedin*, the forerunner of the Northern Alliance now seeking international help to oust the

U.S.—AFGHAN TIMELINE

The motivation guiding U.S. involvement in Afghanistan has evolved from Cold War worries over expanding Soviet influence to corporate oil and gas interests and now to fears of more terrorism and a protracted war. This timeline highlights the turning points.

Lauren Courcy

1978

In April, Afghan Communists come to power in a bloody military coup. Purges of military ranks, mutiny and popular revolt mark the first year of the new regime.

1979

In September, Afghan Prime Minister Hafizullah Amin executes President Nur M. Taraki and seizes power.

The Soviet Union, concerned with stabilizing the new Communist state, invades Afghanistan in December and establishes a puppet regime.

1980

After President Carter authorizes the CIA to aid Afghan rebels in “harassment” of the Soviet occupying forces, he effectively begins the largest American covert action program since Vietnam. Funds for the operation move primarily through Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).
Osama bin Laden first travels to Peshawar, Pakistan to meet with the Afghan *mujahedin*.





Zarmeena's execution in a packed soccer stadium was secretly filmed by RAWA.

later. She immediately began organizing protest rallies of university students and high-school pupils, only to discover that in the brutal struggle between the occupiers and the bearded Islamists who had declared a holy war against them, there was no room for a secular middle-class feminist.

Meena went into exile in Pakistan, but, as it turned out, she was not safe there either. She was assassinated in 1987 in Quetta, where she set up a clinic for women. Her organization blames a combined plot by Khad, the Afghan KGB, and exiled Afghan fundamentalists of Hekmatyar's Hizbe Islami faction, who each had their own reasons for wanting her dead.

Taliban, and Hekmatyar was bombarding the city in an attempt to seize power for himself. But middle-class women could still work and move around, wearing just a scarf over their heads.

For their less well-connected sisters, however, it was a different story. They found themselves at the mercy of ill-educated rural fighters who lost all restraint in the urban atmosphere of Kabul, kidnapping and raping women with virtual impunity. Female doctors and civil servants were appalled when the Taliban seized the capital five years ago and forced them out of their jobs and into burkas, although many others were relieved, at least initially.

The founder of RAWA, known only as Meena, never lived to see the Taliban. She grew up in the days when left-wing rhetoric and feminism were synonymous, and founded her resoundingly named organization in 1977, when she was a 20-year-old student. Unlike some others of her background, though, Meena did not welcome the Soviet invasion two years

Most of RAWA's activities are now among the 2 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan, where it runs co-educational schools for young children, as well as literacy and handicrafts projects for women. Members in the West help to operate a slick Web site (www.rawa.org) that includes a clip of Zarmeena's execution. "Thank you for visiting the homepage of the most oppressed women of the world," it says. Even in Pakistan, though, RAWA has to be careful. Under constant harassment and threats from Pakistani as well as Afghan zealots, members use only their first names and usually refuse to be photographed. The Web site offers a single mobile-phone number: A call brings a visit from Nida, a serious 28-year-old with tinted glasses who is the organization's director of education. She has to be accompanied by a teen-age male relative.

Nida left Afghanistan when she was 12, but has returned a few times, most recently under the Taliban. "It was a shock," she says. "I had never worn a burka in my life before, and I could hardly walk in it. But in Kabul, I saw women sitting

| 1981 | 1982 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| In December, Congress approves \$1.6 million in economic assistance to Pakistan (aid to the Afghan <i>mujahedin</i> went through the ISI) and sales of Patton tanks, self-propelled Howitzers and attack helicopters worth \$1.5 billion. | Bin Laden settles in Peshawar and joins the Afghan <i>mujahedin</i> . | Casey begins to meet secretly with Agha Hasan Abedi, Pakistani founder of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), believed to be an instrumental arms broker between the CIA and Afghan <i>mujahedin</i> . | Until 1985, the CIA buys only Communist-bloc weapons to maintain the appearance of American disinterest. The CIA also buys the trucks driven by Pakistanis and Afghans that head to the <i>mujahedin</i> camps stocked with weapons and return filled with drugs. | In May, Congress approves a deal to send 300 Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to the Afghan <i>mujahedin</i> and provide combat trainers. |
| Meanwhile, President Reagan authorizes CIA Director William Casey to increase weapons supplies to the Afghan <i>mujahedin</i> . | | | By this year, the Pakistan-Afghanistan border region produces 70 percent of the world's high-grade heroin. | Casey commits to an ISI initiative to recruit radical Muslims from around the world to fight with the <i>mujahedin</i> . |
| | | | Bin Laden, financed by his construction-contractor father and the CIA, helps build the Khost tunnel complex, which serves as a major arms depot, training facility and medical center for the <i>mujahedin</i> . | |

under them in the hot sun, selling all they owned to make a little money. If you are a woman without a male relative, you are not allowed to go out at all, even to the doctor, and you have to paint the windows of your home black.

"I know it is said that the Taliban restored some order and discipline in Kabul, but they have stolen the soul of the people. I had heard the stories, but when I saw it with my own eyes, it was unbelievable. People are constantly afraid. If they are not killed by hunger, rockets or disease, they fear being imprisoned or put to death for no reason. The Taliban say this is Islamic law, but it's nothing but arrogance. They even said that women must not wear new burkas, only old."

RAWA continues to educate women and children in Afghanistan, but in small groups and under conditions of great secrecy. "It is an underground business," Nida says. "They keep Islamic texts to hand, so that if they are raided by the Taliban, they can appear to be studying Muslim theology, which is all that is permitted." In Pakistan, the organization does not attach its name to many of the activities it runs, for fear of fundamentalist retaliation; sometimes only the staff of a project know that RAWA is behind it.

Members often come under pressure from their own families. "They do not consider it suitable that we have to spend nights away from home to do our work," Nida says. "Committed women like me tell prospective husbands that we will carry on after we're married, and if they don't like it,



Women are beaten for laughing in public or other "immodesties."

we won't marry them. My father supported me, and so does my husband. He's not afraid of the fundamentalists.

"We are waging a two-way struggle: with our families, to make them understand that we have to work for Afghanistan, and with the fundamentalists, who want to keep the country backward. That's why we make a point of educating boys as well as girls, and in the same classroom: to teach them about progress."

Meena was something of a left-wing firebrand, and the organization she founded has been accused of being Maoist. Nida dismisses this as just one of the calumnies heaped upon RAWA by "ultra male chauvinists." "They say we are whores and tell people that if they send their children to our schools, we will poison them," she says.

It might be closer to the mark to call them middle-class do-gooders, were it not for the fact that their work carries a potential death sentence here. "Only my family knows I am in RAWA," Nida says, "otherwise my life would be in constant danger."

Whatever happens in Afghanistan, activists like Nida face a hard struggle. Hekmatyar is trying to make a comeback from his exile in Iran, the Taliban's attitude to women is medieval, and the Northern Alliance promises social conditions akin to the Thirty Years War. The favored option of the United Nations, a *loya jirga* presided over by the former king, Zahir Shah, is unlikely to have women's rights on its agenda, especially if, as is possible, the Taliban take part.

"We know our way is very difficult, and that it will take a very long time to change attitudes," Nida says. "But we never think of stopping. We are prepared to make sacrifice after sacrifice for Afghanistan." ■

This article originally appeared in the Independent of London on October 4.

| 1987 | 1989 | 1990 | 1992 | 1993 |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Congress agrees to send 700 additional Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to the Afghan <i>mujahedin</i> . | The last Soviet troops withdraw from Afghanistan in February, ending a bloody occupation that left 1.3 million Afghans and Soviets dead. Bin Laden sets up al-Qaeda network of Islamic fundamentalists operating in more than 40 nations around the world. | Bin Laden returns to Saudi Arabia. U.S. troops arrive in Saudi Arabia in August. Bin Laden angers the Saudi royal family by criticizing their policy allowing American military presence in the country. Bin Laden is subsequently expelled from Saudi Arabia. | By this time, the United States has spent as much as \$5 billion to aid the Afghan <i>mujahedin</i> . Bin Laden goes to Sudan to take part in the Islamic revolution there. | Islamic militants bomb the World Trade Center in New York on February 26, killing six and injuring more than 1,000. The CIA fails in a \$65 million plan to buy back Stinger missiles from the Afghan <i>mujahedin</i> . |

Of Food and Bombs

Humanitarian aid has become a weapon of war

By G. Pascal Zachary

The images on the first few days of air attacks by the United States on Afghanistan's Taliban regime were a strange juxtaposition of bombing—and food drops. Guns and planes are playing a decisive role, but there is another weapon in this war on terrorism: humanitarian aid. And while desperately needy refugees hopefully benefit from the assistance, they are also being used as pawns.

Even before the United States fired a shot, President Bush pledged hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to Afghan refugees. The administration wants to portray itself as helping beleaguered Afghans, and relief aid could make the United States appear merciful, especially to Islamic countries that are troubled by the bombing and the inevitable civilian casualties (such as the four U.N. security workers killed on October 9). And America's linkage of food and guns may help—especially when the CIA comes to recruit agents out of the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan.

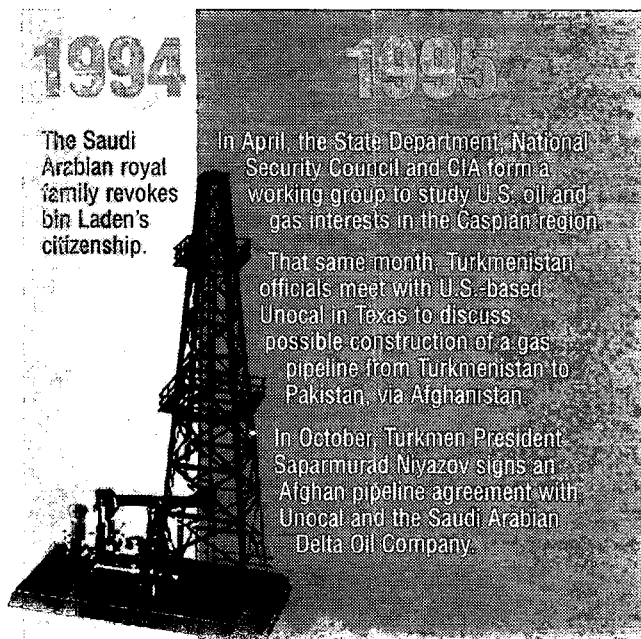
But the American PR offensive seems brittle. Doctors Without Borders is already calling U.S. humanitarian aid counter-productive so long as it's tied to air attacks. "Such action does not answer the needs of the Afghan people and

is likely to undermine attempts to deliver substantial aid to the most vulnerable," says Dr. Jean-Hervé Bradol of Doctors Without Borders, which estimates that 1 million Afghans are on the move, seeking refuge. The U.S. food drops are believed to satisfy the needs of only 37,500 people a day. Millions of Afghans are in danger of starving.

But the United States is not alone in exploiting the humanitarian crisis. The Taliban still seems to think that if it can raise the costs of a fight, then the U.S. coalition will fracture. The Afghan leaders wish to portray themselves as innocent victims of U.S. aggression, and even though they have brought on many of their own misfortunes, their cause might be helped if U.S. bombs kill too many civilians or destroy vital infrastructure that brings on further starvation or disease.

Although the Taliban chieftains may decide they are safer hiding in the caves of Afghanistan, they could easily send loyalists into international refugee camps run by the United Nations. Using the relative safety of these camps—and their resources—they could help sustain the Taliban resistance in Afghanistan. The Taliban also may be encouraging, if not assisting, ordinary Afghans to flood into neighboring Pakistan to destabilize this wavering U.S. ally.

Yet Pakistan is already using the specter of hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees as leverage against both the United States and Afghanistan. Pakistan surely will exact a price from the Americans for receiving Afghan refugees. The price, beyond what the United States already has "paid" in lifting sanctions on Pakistan for its testing of nuclear weapons, could prove to be billions of dollars in American aid to the military government. That government may also use Afghan refugees against the Taliban, citing their presence as a pretext for helping topple the regime or as a reason to endorse a U.S. land invasion.



1996

In March, U.S. Ambassador Tom Simmons urges Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to give exclusive rights to the pipeline to Unocal.

Bill Clinton signs the Anti-Terrorism Act in April, allowing the United States to freeze assets of terrorist organizations.

Faced with expulsion from Sudan due to U.S. pressure, bin Laden returns to Afghanistan in May.

In August, bin Laden issues his first declaration of *jihad*, or holy war, against Americans for "occupying" Saudi Arabia.

By September, the Taliban captures Kabul.

Within hours, the State Department announces it will establish diplomatic relations with the Taliban but soon retracts the statement. Unocal too expresses support for the Taliban, saying the pipeline project will now be easier to complete, but soon withdraws the statement.

Of course, the use of humanitarian aid as a weapon of war is not new. In Rwanda, after the Hutus systematically killed a half a million Tutsis in 1994, Hutu leaders fled to neighboring Zaire (now Congo) and used the safety and resources of U.N. refugee camps to mount further attacks on Tutsi forces. The West ended up protecting killers in the rush to house, feed and clothe refugees.

In 1999, Slobodan Milosevic drove out Muslim Kosovars from southern Serbia partly as a way of raising the costs to the NATO alliance fighting against him. By creating a vast pool of Kosovar refugees, Milosevic hoped to destabilize neighboring Macedonia, where dominant Slavs were already in a tense standoff with minority ethnic Albanians. While Milosevic now awaits trial for war crimes in The Hague, he has left a legacy of strife in Macedonia. Earlier this year, Kosovar refugees (along with Macedonian Albanians) mounted an armed insurrection, launching attacks from the safety of positions inside U.N.-controlled Kosovo.

As Kosovo and Rwanda show, so-called humanitarian crises often confuse the international community and raise troubling moral questions—questions that should be asked about the current crisis in Afghanistan. Helping Afghan refugees, aid donors—and their agents on the ground—may be helping the Taliban regime either to regroup or stave off annihilation. All this raises doubts about the wisdom of the Bush administration in linking bombs and humanitarian aid so closely. As Doctors Without Borders argues, such a link puts a cloud over independent aid organizations “who are less likely to be perceived as impartial actors in the future.”

Ultimately, the militarization of humanitarian aid may do precisely what the U.S. public doesn't want: prolong the suffering of refugees, undermine real aid and render the bombing campaign a failure. ■

G. Pascal Zachary is the author of *The Global Me: New Cosmopolitans and the Competitive Edge*.

Questionable Ties

Tracking bin Laden's money flow leads back to Midland, Texas

By Wayne Madsen

On September 24, President George W. Bush appeared at a press conference in the White House Rose Garden to announce a crackdown on the financial networks of terrorists and those who support them. “U.S. banks that have assets of these groups or individuals must freeze their accounts,” Bush declared. “And U.S. citizens or businesses are prohibited from doing business with them.”

But the president, who is now enjoying an astounding 92 percent approval rating, hasn't always practiced what he is now preaching: Bush's own businesses were once tied to financial figures in Saudi Arabia who currently support bin Laden.

In 1979, Bush's first business, Arbusto Energy, obtained financing from James Bath, a Houstonian and close family friend. One of many investors, Bath gave Bush \$50,000 for a 5 percent stake in Arbusto. At the time, Bath was the sole U.S. business representative for Salem bin Laden, head of the wealthy Saudi Arabian family and a brother (one of 17) to Osama bin Laden. It has long been suspected, but never proven, that the Arbusto money came directly from Salem bin Laden. In a statement issued shortly after the September

1997

Bin Laden strikes up a friendship with Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar and comes under the Taliban's protection.

The CIA plans an operation to snatch bin Laden out of Afghanistan but ultimately aborts the mission.

A Taliban delegation comes to Washington in February to lobby for official recognition by the United States and meet with Unocal.

Another Taliban delegation returns to the United States in November to meet with Unocal and later with U.S. State Department officials. In the same month, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visits Islamabad, Pakistan and calls the Taliban's gender policies “despicable.”

1998

At a February meeting of al-Qaeda, Bin Laden issues a *fatwa* stating that it is the “individual duty for every Muslim” to kill Americans and American allies.

On August 8, the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya are bombed, killing more than 200; evidence suggests bin Laden sponsored the attacks. In response, the United States fires some 70 cruise missiles at bin Laden's training camps in Afghanistan around Khost and Jalalabad, but bin Laden remains safe and hidden.

The United States fires another 13 missiles at a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan alleged to be involved in weapons production. Unocal suspends the pipeline project after the U.S. missile strikes.

The United States offers \$5 million for bin Laden's capture.

1999

Bin Laden goes underground, and the Taliban claim no knowledge of his whereabouts.

The CIA trains and equips about 60 commandos from Pakistan's ISI to enter Afghanistan to capture or kill bin Laden, but the plan is aborted in October when a military coup ousts Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

11 attacks, the White House vehemently denied the connection, insisting that Bath invested his own money, not Salem bin Laden's, in Arbusto.

In conflicting statements, Bush at first denied ever knowing Bath, then acknowledged his stake in Arbusto and that he was aware Bath represented Saudi interests. In fact, Bath has extensive ties, both to the bin Laden family and major players in the scandal-ridden Bank of Commerce and Credit International (BCCI) who have gone on to fund Osama bin Laden. BCCI defrauded depositors of \$10 billion in the '80s in what has been called the "largest bank fraud in world financial history" by former Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau. During the '80s, BCCI also acted as a main conduit for laundering money intended for clandestine CIA activities, ranging from financial support to the Afghan *mujahedin* to paying intermediaries in the Iran-Contra affair.

When Salem bin Laden died in 1988, powerful Saudi Arabian banker and BCCI principal Khalid bin Mahfouz inherited his interests in Houston. Bath ran a business for bin

17.6 percent stake in the company. Bakhsh was a business partner with Pharaon in Saudi Arabia; his banker there just happened to be bin Mahfouz.

Though Bush told the *Wall Street Journal* he had "no idea" BCCI was involved in Harken's financial dealings, the network of connections between Bush and BCCI is so extensive that the *Journal* concluded their investigation of the matter in 1991 by stating: "The number of BCCI-connected people who had dealings with Harken—all since George W. Bush came on board—raises the question of whether they mask an effort to cozy up to a presidential son." Or even the president: Bath finally came under investigation by the FBI in 1992 for his Saudi business relationships, accused of funneling Saudi money through Houston in order to influence the foreign policies of the Reagan and first Bush administrations.

Worst of all, bin Mahfouz allegedly has been financing the bin Laden terrorist network—making Bush a U.S. citizen who has done business with those who finance and support terrorists. According to *USA Today*, bin Mahfouz and other Saudis attempted to transfer \$3 million to various bin Laden front operations in Saudi Arabia in 1999. ABC News reported the same year that Saudi officials stopped bin Mahfouz from contributing money directly to bin Laden. (Bin Mahfouz's sister is also a wife of Osama bin Laden, a fact that former CIA Director James Woolsey revealed in 1998 Senate testimony.)

When President Bush announced he is hot on the trail of the money used over the years to finance terrorism, he must realize that trail ultimately leads not only to Saudi Arabia, but to some of the same financiers who originally helped propel him into the oil business and later the White House. The ties between bin Laden and the White House may be much closer than he is willing to acknowledge. ■

Wayne Madsen, an investigative journalist based in Washington, is the author of *Genocide and Covert Operations in Africa* 1993-1999.

Bush must realize that the trail leads to some of the same financiers who originally helped propel him into the oil business and later the White House.

Mahfouz in Houston and joined a partnership with bin Mahfouz and Gaith Pharaon, BCCI's frontman in Houston's Main Bank.

The Arbusto deal wasn't the last time Bush looked to highly questionable sources to invest in his oil dealings. After several incarnations, Arbusto emerged in 1986 as Harken Energy Corporation. When Harken ran into trouble a year later, Saudi Sheik Abdullah Taha Bakhsh purchased a

2000

Unocal talks with the Taliban about a million-barrel-a-day oil pipeline project through Afghanistan, a separate project from the original gas pipeline.

On October 21, Arab-Afghan militants, allegedly sponsored by bin Laden, bomb the *USS Cole*, stationed in Yemen, killing 17 sailors and injuring 39.

2001

In May, Congress awards \$43 million to the Taliban in "drought relief" for farmers who used to grow opium.

On September 11, terrorists alleged to be linked to bin Laden and the al-Qaeda network hijack four commercial jets, creating suicide bombs that demolish the Twin Towers in New York, destroy part of the Pentagon in Washington and crash into the Pennsylvania countryside.

Congress authorizes \$320 million in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan and its neighboring states. The United States simultaneously launches military attacks on Afghanistan.

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Going Down

Congress is only making it worse

By David Moberg

Beyond their immediate toll, the September 11 terrorist attacks kicked an already tottering economy toward what could be a sharp recession. Hundreds of thousands of announced layoffs are likely to ripple through the economy, further souring consumer and business confidence, cutting consumption and halting investment. As tax revenues decline, state and local governments will be forced to cut services and jobs. Even before this recent crisis, the manufacturing and agriculture sectors had been suffering for several years. The economy had been running on consumer debt and the twin bubbles of high tech investment and stock speculation. Now that magic is gone.

The collective shock of September 11 also has given a new sense of urgency to bolstering the domestic economy and a new respectability to our much-maligned federal government. Because of the war against the Taliban and terrorists, the administration needs a semblance of bipartisanship, and it cannot risk seeming completely insensitive to average working people.

Across most of the political spectrum, there's a conviction that low interest rates alone won't be enough to fix the damage. The federal government must also use its budget powers to pump up a deflated economy. Yet many congressional Republicans are far more insistent on using the crisis to promote a grab-bag of irresponsible measures—mainly tax cuts—that have nothing to do with fighting terrorism or boosting economic growth and everything to do with their long-standing ideological agenda of shrinking government and making the rich richer. The danger is that Democrats will be cowed by presidential appeals for bipartisanship to accept nakedly rapacious policies covered with a few fig leaves of compassion.

The mandate for the federal government is clear: to quickly increase demand for products and services by spending more and by putting more money in the hands of the consumers most likely to spend. The combined stimulus has to be large enough to be noticeable—at least 1 percent of the trillion-dollar gross domestic product, or \$100 billion, even according to Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan. Such spending not only would keep people employed and provide business markets, but it would help renew confidence (reviving the “animal spirits” that drive business expansion, as Keynes argued). At the same time, these policies to stimulate immediate consumption need to serve long-term goals: promoting productivity as well as social equality and economic security. Fortunately, the best short-term strategies also contribute to the long-term objectives.

Unfortunately, most of the Republican ideas are bad on both counts. While the mix of proposals has been in flux, some of the leading ideas advanced by both the White House and Congress

include speeding up the start of tax cuts approved earlier this year, cutting corporate income tax rates and capital gains taxes, accelerating depreciation schedules, offering investment tax credits, and eliminating the alternative minimum tax for corporations. With audacity that irritated even Democrats who consider themselves free traders, the administration also has promoted legislation giving the president special “trade promotion authority”—formerly known as “fast track”—as a measure to both fight terrorism and stimulate growth.

But nearly everyone in Congress approved emergency aid for New York and \$15 billion in grants and loan guarantees for the airlines. The bailout of the airlines, which adamantly resist government regulation, was more a testament to their quick exercise of well-financed political clout than to the merit of their case, but at least the legislation gives preference to loan



ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES

Laid-off workers were ignored in the \$15 billion airline bailout.

guarantees that provide the federal government an equity stake. Nevertheless, the ad hoc aid for an industry where most companies were losing heavily even before September 11 triggered a long line of suitors for government salvation—hotels, rental car agencies, insurance companies and more. In most of these cases, corporations are simply pleading for the public to assume the risks of their business, when a general economic stimulus would be far preferable to any industry bailout. (However, in the case of the steel industry, battered for years by dumping of steel products by foreign companies, an industry-specific package of loan guarantees, import restraints and shared responsibility for retirees is needed.)

As the discussion of a stimulus package unfolded, Democrats—prodded by labor unions—pressed for financial

assistance to the estimated 100,000 laid-off airline workers ignored in the bailout of the airlines. The aid—as well as a Democratic proposal to have the federal government take responsibility for airline security—was delayed by Republican opposition on the absurd ideological grounds that such federalization represented creeping socialism.

Democrats also proposed unemployment insurance extension and reform as well as subsidies for health insurance, especially to help laid-off workers preserve their employer-paid coverage. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has proposed that the federal government quickly expand Medicaid payments to help maintain state programs and subsidize health insurance for low-income unemployed workers. Washington should also revive revenue-sharing and forestall state and local government cutbacks that would only worsen the recession.

Congressional conservatives are unhappy that Bush has endorsed extension of unemployment insurance benefits and modest sums for states to expand health care coverage. The president even has indicated that he might reluctantly accept a minimum-wage increase (probably hoping to win Democratic support for large business tax breaks). But Bush's proposal would do nothing to make unemployment insurance more widely available (only about 37 percent of the unemployed receive insurance benefits), would provide extended benefits to very few workers, and in many states would not raise the meager minimum payments. This inadequate plan would especially shortchange women formerly on welfare, who are typically in low-wage or contingent jobs that may not qualify for unemployment insurance. Yet there is evidence—such as the sharp drop from July to October in employment rates of single mothers—that many former welfare mothers are losing their jobs without any safety net.

In stark contrast to the Republican proposal, Illinois Democratic Rep. Jan Schakowsky proposed rescinding the scheduled future tax cuts that are skewed heavily to the rich. And the administration may join Democrats in supporting at least some version of a further temporary tax rebate, most likely targeted to workers who received little or no tax rebate earlier this year. The argument for such rebates and against the Republican tax plans is straightforward: Low-income people not only are more likely to need help in tough times, but are more likely to spend the rebate immediately.

Likewise, direct government spending—if the money is pumped into existing but underfunded programs so that it can be spent quickly—is a far better stimulus than general tax cuts. As Robert Scott and Christian Weller, economists at the Washington-based Economic Policy Institute, argue, federal investment could be quickly pumped into Amtrak improvements and school construction or repair. New affordable housing and a wide range of infrastructure improvements and new construction, such as high-speed rail, are also needed.

Corporate tax breaks that supposedly lower the cost of capital are simply windfalls to the undeserving and do almost nothing to stimulate new business investment. Furthermore, in the Republican proposals, the tax cuts for corporations and the rich are permanent (and many won't kick in quickly) and will simply starve government of funds needed in the future. That will lead to fiscal crisis—such as budget deficits when the economy is growing (precisely when the budget should be more in balance or even running surpluses) or to underfunding of Medicare, Social Security and other essential government programs.

House Majority Leader Dick Armey argues that the economy will be propped up by a three-legged stool: the stimulus plan, trade promotion authority and energy legislation. Armey's stimulus leg is both too weak and of the wrong shape to do its job. The energy legislation, a giveaway to the oil companies, is equally misfit: Incorrectly billed as a way to reduce energy prices (which are already declining without the legislation), it fails to recognize energy efficiency as the most sensible path to reduce long-term energy costs, lower trade deficits, enhance national security and protect the environment. The final leg—trade promotion authority—is suitable mainly to support a throne for the limited few. Indeed, the majority of Americans are likely losers if fast track is approved.

The claims that trade promotion authority—which Bush hopes to use in pushing through an extension of NAFTA to South America and new rounds of negotiation at the World Trade Organization—would buoy the economy or fight terrorism are deeply flawed. Trade promotion authority on its own does nothing except limit congressional debate and bar amendments to trade deals. Moreover, the presumed trade agreements, which could be negotiated without it, would provide only a modest stimulus. For example, the International Trade Commission has projected that eliminating all tariffs and quotas would increase the economy by only about \$19 billion, or less than two-tenths of a percent of the gross domestic product. But even that may be overstated. As Peter Dorman of the Economic Policy Institute observes, the models typically used to project trade benefits are based on assumptions that ignore all of the criticisms of free trade and have a dreadful track record of predicting results of trade deals.

In any case, trade benefits are distributed unevenly, with owners of capital and high-income workers gaining the most, according to Dean Baker and Mark Weisbrot of the Center for Economic and Policy Research. Even granting that trade may have stimulated growth, they conclude that the wages of three-fourths of the U.S. work force have declined by roughly 2 to 13 percent over the past two decades, depending on which economic model is used. Meanwhile, the growing trade deficit primarily in manufactured goods—concealed by the now-stalled growth of the domestic economy—has not only led to the loss of 3.8 million jobs over the past eight years and stagnation in workers' earnings, but puts the entire economy at risk of a currency crisis, according to Jeff Faux of the Economic Policy Institute.

For trade to improve the general welfare and broadly raise incomes in the United States and elsewhere to stimulate economic growth, there must be strong international safeguards for workers rights and the environment. But the references to labor and the environment that Chairman Bill Thomas (R-California) pushed through the House Ways and Means Committee in a highly partisan vote were much weaker than the trade-negotiating language Congress has adopted many times before—with virtually no progress in those deals. Many Democrats who previously had supported fast track have opposed presidential trade promotion authority this year.

All of this hardly sounds like a strategy for preventing recession. If Armey—or Bush—wants the policy to revive the faltering economy to rest on a three-legged stool of regressive, ineffective tax cuts, a misguided energy policy and trade deals that bring high costs and few benefits, he should sit on it wearing a dunce cap. ■

Loyal Opposition

Why the Democrats will get trounced in 2002

By Doug Ireland

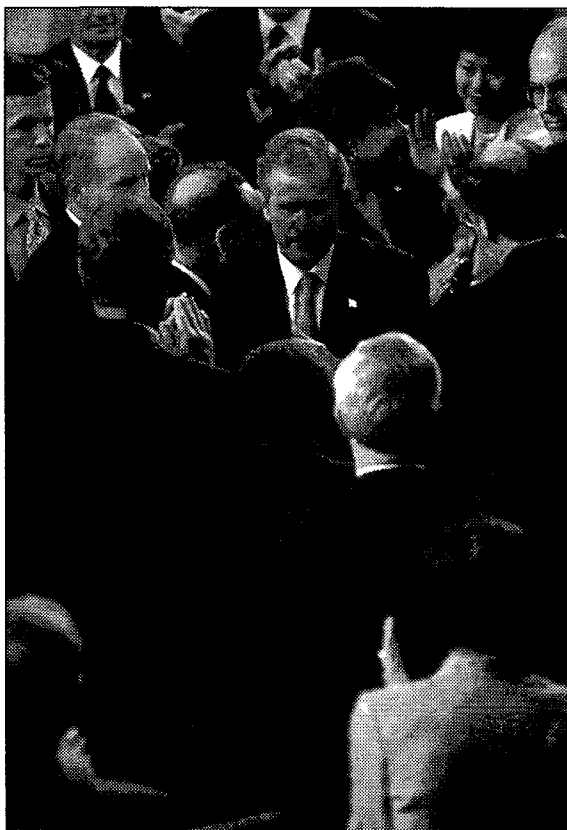
Five days before the bombing of Afghanistan began—in announcing the reopening of Washington to air traffic—George W. Bush declared, “This Thursday, ticket counters and airplanes will fly out of Ronald Reagan airport.”

It was of this president with the addled tongue whom Al Gore spoke when, deploying the drawl he turns on when trying to seem folksy, he hollered to Iowa’s Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner that “George Bush is *mah* commander-in-chief!” (If Gore’s beard gets any longer, Bush can infiltrate *him* into Afghanistan.) Gore’s frothy nationalism symbolized the degree to which the Democratic leadership has abdicated its responsibility as watchdog on a president who is, to much of the world, out of control.

As far as the militarization of the campaign against terrorism is concerned, the Democrats are in the tank. Spineless fear of voter revenge at the polls next year—in the wake of the Afghanistan bombing, Bush’s Gallup poll popularity at 92 percent broke yet another record—has cowed the Democrats into silence on conduct of the war.

Oh, there has been rear-guard congressional action that has blunted some of the unconstitutionality in Attorney General John Ashcroft’s anti-terrorism legislation, but it still shreds civil liberties protections to an unprecedented degree. Democrats have been banking their hopes on inclusion of “sunset” provisions in the rights-reducing bills that would require Congress to review them in two years. But once these rights are voted away, we won’t get them back. Not only will Democrats from marginal seats be even more reluctant than usual to stand up for civil liberties, but it will be almost certainly a Republican Congress, not a Democratic one, that reconsiders their evisceration.

The *New York Times* trotted out old Arthur Schlesinger Jr. to preach that the Democrats will win in 2002 because “during our recent wars the party in opposition has always gained seats in mid-term congressional elections.” But of the five examples cited by Schlesinger, in four of them it was a *Democrat* in the White House with Republicans acting like a *real* opposition—the vicious attacks on Wilson, Roosevelt, Truman and Johnson are notorious—that constantly criticized U.S. policy and conduct of those wars. Now, no negative word about Bush passes the lips of the Democratic leadership, the conduct of the war is taboo for



Democrats have rallied around Bush’s popularity ratings.

DOUGLASS GRAHAM/ROLL CALL PHOTOS

all, and the few tepid criticisms of anti-terrorist policies here at home are left to safe-seaters like Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy (unopposed by the GOP last time he ran) and Michigan Rep. John Conyers (who could rival Strom Thurmond’s re-election longevity if he wished).

In the 1990 election Schlesinger mentions, when Bush *pere* was in power, Democrats gained only one Senate seat and just eight House seats, most due to GOP retirements and local factors, not the Gulf War. And just two years later, after redistricting, the Democrats hemorrhaged in both chambers. Schlesinger’s argument most certainly doesn’t fit next year’s circumstances.

Here’s why: Recruitment of heavyweight Democratic challengers to take on GOP incumbents, already lousy

before September 11, has since become a “disaster,” says Russ Hemenway, veteran director of the National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC). “No one wants to run unless they’re going to be in the majority,” he reports—and that won’t happen.

Only two Republican senators were rated seriously vulnerable by NCEC before the hijackings. But after September 11, Oregon’s popular Democratic governor, John Kitzhaber, decided not to make his expected Senate run, leaving incumbent Gordon Smith nearly certain of victory against the admirable but lackluster likely opponent, Rep. Peter DeFazio. And while New Hampshire’s conservative Democratic governor, Jeane Shaheen, is maintaining her Senate candidacy, Dubya is putting enormous personal pressure on Bush loyalist GOP Rep. John Sununu (son of Daddy’s chief of staff) to challenge Sen. Bob Smith in a primary. A not-too-bright nutcase with a ridiculous coiffure who alienated Republicans by briefly embarking on an independent presidential candidacy, Smith will be trounced by the popular young Sununu—who’ll go on to win handily over Shaheen.

Democrats haven't a prayer of retaking the seats being vacated by Phil Gramm in Texas; by Strom Thurmond in South Carolina, where Rep. Lindsey Graham (the attractive young conservative who gained fame and statewide popularity in Clinton's impeachment) will romp to victory; or by Jesse Helms in North Carolina, where Elizabeth Dole will have no trouble taking the seat against any of the Democratic challengers (especially the rich patrician stiff and ex-Clinton Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles). The war has also moved two GOP incumbents against whom Democrats might previously have had an outside shot—Colorado's Wayne Allard, the weaker of the two, and Maine's Susan Collins—into the "likely Republican" column.

By contrast, there are at least seven highly vulnerable Democratic incumbents. And while Dick Cheney has been running Bush's war from his undisclosed bunker, Dubya has been spending hours on the phone recruiting GOPers. Besides New Hampshire, Bush has turned up the heat under New Jersey's extremely popular former governor, Tom Kean, a moderate, to take on scandal-plagued Robert Torricelli. Bush has already persuaded South Dakota Rep. John Thune—that state's lone congressman—to abandon a planned gubernatorial race and challenge the invisible and unpopular incumbent Democratic junior senator, Tim Johnson. And it was Bush who persuaded St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman to run against Minnesota's in-trouble Paul Wellstone.

Missouri's Jean Carnahan (appointed to her seat after her dead husband won the election) stands a good chance of falling against ex-Rep. Jim Talent, who almost snatched the governorship two years ago. Iowa's Tom Harkin is in the battle of his life against popular Rep. Greg Ganske, and Montana's Max Baucus and Louisiana's Mary Landrieu are also in deep trouble. Barring a miracle, Democrats will lose their one-vote Senate majority.

Things are even worse on the House side, Hemenway says, where redistricting means that "hardly a single Republican House incumbent will be defeated." At the same time, Democrats will sustain major losses from gerrymandering. In Texas, a Democratic judge just upheld a redistricting plan that will cost the Democrats at least seven seats, according to NCEC (but Texas Democrats fear the losses could rise to nine, including senior party figures like Rep. Martin Frost.)

In Michigan, the Democrats are in disarray because maps drawn in a process dominated by the Chamber of Commerce have put Democratic incumbents in districts where they'll be pitted in primaries against each other—like veteran John Dingell, who might well lose his primary to Democratic Rep. Lynn Rivers. NCEC forecasts a loss of three seats in the state, but local Democrats think collateral damage from war and redistricting could cost them as many as five.

In Pennsylvania, the new congressional lines will mean a loss of at least four Democratic seats. It could get even dicier for other Democratic incumbents: Some of the final lines in other states are not known; others are already in court. By con-

trast, redistricting controlled by Democrats will at this point give them only one new seat in California and a likely pick-up of four in Georgia. What all this means is that the Republicans will add at least nine—and perhaps as many as 14—to their House majority.

Democrats' chances in 2002 are further undermined by the fact that the war has sucked the oxygen out of the party's attempts to get traction on other issues. Moreover, the Democrats have already caved in to the idea of further tax cuts—\$60 to \$75 billion worth. Although the notion of cutting taxes in the middle of an open-ended war is pure folly—even an *echt* Reaganite like George Will has denounced the notion as "economics as psychotherapy" and doomed to failure—the Democrats have become supply-siders and are only squabbling about to whom the cuts should go, instead of opposing them altogether.

Another harbinger of the looming Democratic disaster in 2002 can be found in New Jersey's gubernatorial contest. There, the Republican nominee—Jersey City Mayor Bret Schundler, an ideological conservative policy wonk—had been assumed to be a dead mackerel against Democrat Jim McGreevey. But since the war began, three different polls show Schundler picking up strength—anywhere from five to seven points—despite a gaffe-strewn performance. Schundler's sudden jump is directly attributable to the war, says Nick Acocella, the savvy editor of the insider electronic newsletter *New Jersey Politifax*. One of the Democrats' major issues against Schundler was his pro-handgun position—however, gun stores all over the country have reported a dramatic increase in sales of 200 to 300 percent as paranoia about terrorism increases. While Schundler will still lose, the gun issue is off the table in New Jersey this year as it will be across the country in 2002, depriving Democrats of a key hot button against Republicans.

And what if there's another terrorist attack, either here or in Europe? Let's face it: Many of the "homeland security" measures put in place—like stationing National Guard troops in airports—are feel-better palliatives as ineffectual as those taken by the Hollywood studios, who have moved cop cars used in movies off their lots and parked them—empty—in front of the studio gates. One more terrorist incident will only drive security hysteria here at home to a fever pitch, sharply accentuating the already-evident lurch to the right.

In the meantime, watch out for those flying ticket counters. ■

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A New Peace Movement?

By Gordon S. Clark

As we all recognize, September 11 changed everything. Fortunately, some of those changes appear to be happening in the peace movement. Response to the crisis has been immediate, vigorous and inspiring. On the national level, the International Action Center refocused its organizing for the scrubbed World Bank protests, forming Act Now to

country. In New York City, several hundred people, led by Palestinian and Arab-American groups, were on the street only two days after the attack with an inspired "listening canvass," engaging citizens in conversations about their concerns and such questions as "will war make you feel safer?"

The racism inherent in both the new war and the domestic "Homeland Security" response provides another challenge to peace groups. Opposition to anti-Islamic and anti-Arab bigotry and violence has been a prominent point of unity for coalitions across the country, as has active support for Muslim and Arab peoples. In Chicago, the American Friends Service Committee has held vigils and "solidarity defense" gatherings at local mosques.

In organizing as well, the outreach has gone far beyond the "usual suspects." The ANSWER coalition is composed of numerous people-of-color organizations. Peace organizers in North Carolina are working with the Arab-American community and with blue-collar labor groups. Organizing meetings across the country, including the mammoth 600-person sessions in New York City, have been diverse.

New challenges abound in the days ahead. Much of the campus organizing

has been done by students who switched, almost seamlessly, from the globalization work they had been doing. It remains to be seen how this new generation, with its different political memory and different organizing tactics, merges with traditional peace groups.

Breaking through the national media is another immense challenge. While editorial boards and syndicated pundits cry for retaliation, and the national and cable news shows have adopted America Goes Postal logos, it is hoped that this war cry will wear thin soon, if not create a subtle backlash. There is already evidence that support for war is a mile wide but only an inch deep, as peace activists nationwide report large-scale public support for their demonstrations, even in places such as Kansas City.

The last and greatest challenge is providing a cogent alternative to war. The public is asking questions that the media and government have not answered. A "teachable moment" of historic proportions exists. Peace Action director Kevin Martin put it this way: "The right answers for peace and justice in the world are now suddenly the right answers for safety and security at home." ■

Gordon S. Clark is former executive director of Peace Action.



New York's Union Square on September 21.

Stop War and End Racism (ANSWER) and drawing as many as 25,000 people to a September 29 march in Washington. The traditional peace groups—including Pax Christi USA, War Resisters League, Peace Action, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Fellowship of Reconciliation and the American Friends Service Committee—revitalized the National Coalition for Peace and Justice, and coordinated actions across the nation on October 7. Both groups are already organizing for the next rounds of coordinated actions on October 29 and November 7.

Although barely reported on by the national media, there have been hundreds of actions across the nation, with new groups springing up everywhere. In New York City, thousands of people marched on October 7. College campuses have been a hotbed of activity, with teach-ins, vigils and protests.

Unique challenges confront this new peace organizing. Activists have, for the most part, been able to balance opposition to military action with sensitivity to the anger and fear generated by the terrorist attack. Many of the groups organizing against war also organized in support of the victims of the attacks, giving money and blood. A newly formed network in Ithaca, New York, protested with the slogan "Our grief is not a cry for war," which was echoed at demonstrations across the

Shakespeare at the Barricades

By Matthew Price

In E.P. Thompson's classic work of historical recovery, *The Making of the English Working Class*, he writes that his aim is to rescue the toilers and lost laborers of history from the "enormous

The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes
By Jonathan Rose
Yale University Press
544 pages, \$50

condescension of posterity." Thompson's book, published in 1963, inaugurated a sea change in the study of labor history, influencing generations of British and American scholars to investigate the realities and hardships of working-class life on both sides of the Atlantic.

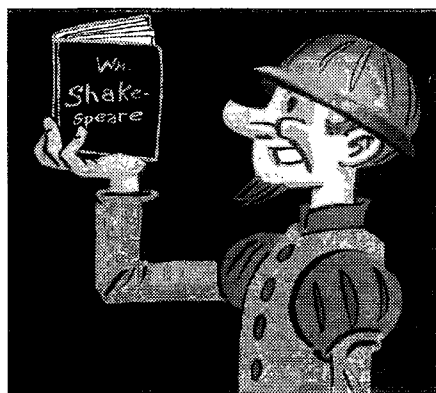
But often missing in the accounts, rich as they were, was the mental landscape of workers: What did they think? What did they read? Though Thompson included a fine chapter on the culture of the self-taught, this question has bedeviled scholars for ages, for there is seemingly a dearth of documentary evidence; many workers simply did not leave behind any readily available written testimonies. As Robert Darton once wrote, it's not that historians don't want to know what they read and thought—they do, but "keep running into the vast silence that has swallowed most of mankind's thinking."

This is a problem, however, that Jonathan Rose has triumphantly grappled with. He has extended a formidably acute set of antennae into this gaping void, and what he has heard is a resounding, passionate noise. To read this book is to gain entry into a fraternity of intellectual strivers, real-life Jude Fawleys struggling to make sense of their world through words. It turns out that the unlettered and inarticulate masses "had great deal to say," Rose writes. We just have to listen closely. *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* is a tour de force, social history at its best.

How did Rose do it? How did he break down this vast wall of silence? His methods are as fascinating as

his findings. Employing what he calls a "history of audiences" and exploiting a vast trove of recent, pioneering bibliographic work by scholars of book history, Rose trawled through countless uncovered diaries, unpublished memoirs, oral interviews, social surveys, letters to newspaper editors, lost autobiographies, school surveys and even library records, bringing the previously hidden literary enthusiasms of working-class men and women into the open light.

What he uncovers is an astonishing range of thoughtful eloquence on the power of books and the written word. The common theme in the testimonies is of a sense of liberation gained through reading. As Chaim Lewis, who grew up poor in the London of the 1920s, wrote in his autobiography, "Life only becomes



conscious of itself when it is translated into word, for only in the word is reality discovered." This, Rose aptly notes, is "the autodidact's mission statement: to be more than passive consumers of literature, to be active thinkers and writers."

In Rose's account, this has been a vital tradition in British life. From the world of 19th-century mutual improvement societies (a combination of reading circle and informal adult education network) to the miners' libraries of the Welsh coal fields, from the contentious pedagogical battlegrounds of the Worker's Educational Association schools to street corners where manual laborers would gather to read aloud to one another, Rose deftly explores the

many ways British workers indulged their intellectual interests. His subjects hungrily clamor after the works of classic literature; the names Bunyan, Shakespeare, Dickens, Thackeray, Eliot march across the pages, a legion who inspired countless working-class souls.

Rose is sharply critical of the cultural studies crowd (the fruits of the MLA come in for some hard blows), who have dismissed the great books as unnecessary or as the oppressive products of bourgeois ideology. This is only so much patronizing nonsense, Rose argues, with a justifiable sense of pique. He pointedly asks: "What if the same books recommended by intellectual elites brought aesthetic joy, political emancipation and philosophical excitement to ordinary readers?"

For Rose, the answer to this question is thunderously obvious. And surely his book is one of the few works of cultural studies that cites Matthew Arnold approvingly; the 19th-century literary critic has been a whipping boy for academic bien-pensants who roundly scorn him for his supposed elitism. Yet the Arnoldian mantras of "sweetness and light," "to make best that is known and thought in the world current everywhere," contain the seeds of radical action. Countless characters in Rose's pages movingly testify to literature's power, its ability to ignite what he calls "insurrections in the mind."

Birmingham factory worker V.W. Garatt is a moving example of a mind set on fire by great books. He would stealthily read while at his work bench, and took evening courses in English literature, where he read Keats, Shelley and Tennyson, figures who "swamped the trivialities of life and gave my ego a fullness and strength in the luster of which noble conceptions were born and flourished."

As his reconsideration of Arnold amply demonstrates, one of the most striking qualities of Rose's arguments is how they force one to re-evaluate the scorned artifacts and thinkers of the Victorian era. Consider Rose's nuanced

examination of Samuel Smile's *Self-Help*, one of the era's bestselling tomes. Here is George Gregory, son of an illiterate miner, recalling its profound influence on him. The book "has lived within me for more than sixty years," he recollected in old age. "Such information stirred in me dormant powers. I began to see myself an individual, and how I may be able to make a break from the general situation of which I had regarded myself as inseparable part. I realized that my lack of education was not decisive of what I might become, so I commenced to reach out into the future."

Self-Help has been derided as a crude symbol of grasping, hopelessly bourgeois individualism. But this is merely a caricature; under the influence of the message of self-improvement, Gregory did not become an acquisitive Tory, or a fleshpot of capitalism, but a socialist, trade-union organizer, anti-war activist and a co-operative society manager. "That is what *Self-Help* set in motion," Rose tersely notes.

Indeed, fire-breathing Victorian men of letters like Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin (a self-described "violent Tory of the old school") are the heroes of the book, not Karl Marx. The British Labour Party owes its formation to Ruskin's social and economic criticism, not historical materialism or vanguard Marxist revolutionaries. Marx didn't mean much to the first Labour MPs—many of them self-taught industrial workers—who cited Ruskin as the most formative influences on their thought. If one can venture to make a generalization, it's that a kind of hard-headed, cultural intransigence and political radicalism existed side-by-side in the working classes.

In his forays into the world of Ruskin College and the WEA, the most illustrious of the continuing-education institutions in the early 20th century, Rose explores the tensions between ideology and literary passion with skill and insight. Marxist critics of the WEA have charged that the schools helped steer British workers away from Marxism. But Rose makes a convincing case that the students were put off by the hectoring tones of the militants and their strident contempt for litera-

ture, not to mention their obsessive use of Marxist jargon, which hardly made for inviting reading. "Put bluntly, the trouble with Marx was Marxists, whom British workers generally found to be dogmatic, selfish and anti-literary," Rose writes.

Even those who were Communists were frustrated with the opacities of Marxist theory and the philistine world of radical activism. Consider compositor, self-taught philosopher and Communist Party member T.A. Jackson, "the beau ideal of the proletarian philosopher," who often found his love of literature and his commitment to Communism at loggerheads. He found a great deal to value in Marx, but his bibliophilia was simply too much to sacrifice before the altar of Communism. Writing of his love for literature as young man, he says, "I was seeing [the world] not merely with eyes of flesh but with the eyes of heightened imagination;—seeing it not only through spectacles manufactured by an optician, but through glasses supplied by magicians named Charles Dickens, Walter Scott, William Makepeace Thackeray, Joseph Addison, Daniel Defoe, Harry

Fielding, Toby Smollett, Sam Johnson and Will Shakespeare himself—and that was the trouble. ... How could anyone expect me to even begin to contemplate the overturn of a world as wonderful as this?"

If there are any shortcomings to Rose's study, it's that he doesn't sketch the fate of this autodidact tradition in British culture. Has it vanished before the onslaught of electronic media? Where is the next generation of T.A. Jacksons? His book doesn't so much end as trail off, with a critique of intellectual snobbery and the views of working-class intellectuals on literary bohemia. And I for one would have liked to have seen more on cultural-studies pioneer Raymond Williams, who was deeply involved with adult education movements during his life. (I must also note the irony that a book about working-class reading habits is priced at a staggering \$50. This is a pity.)

Still, one hopes this otherwise masterful book will be inspiration for some enterprising scholar to pen a much needed sequel: *The Intellectual Life of the American Working Classes*. ■

Matthew Price is a book critic in New York.

Head for the Hills

By Joshua Rothkopf

In dreams, as the song goes, David Lynch walks and talks with you. He's by now our premiere hypnotist—a Hitchcock off the narrative hinges—and *Mulholland Drive* is his *Vertigo* (if you can imagine a *Vertigo*

Mulholland Drive
Written and directed by David Lynch

that's all vertigo). Once again the subject is play-acting, with Hollywood's hanging gardens subbing in naturally for those Golden Gate psycho-vistas. And the anxiety comes not from uncertain freefall but a fear of landing hard on one's fantasies: the death of pretending. With this new one, Lynch goes darker and deeper; it's a big, terrifying epic about being swallowed whole by the fun factory, perhaps consentingly.

In retrospect, Lynch seems to have been working up to it: *Blue Velvet* presented imaginative curiosity as treacherous but, subversively, essential to rough sex and pure love alike. Even *Dune*, ever harder to dismiss these days, is suffused with dream prophecy made real; Lynch correctly identified the core of Frank Herbert's waddy epic in a mantra shifted to his script's heart: "The sleeper must awaken."

Mulholland Drive has its own variation, spoken by a mysterious pardner known only as The Cowboy: "Hey, pretty girl—time to wake up." But here, and it's thrilling to behold, Lynch is finally beyond such distinctions of consciousness; he's freed himself up like never before by placing his action at the Great Fakeness proper, where the process of becoming is, itself, a slip

of the skin. From the first scene on, a violent limo wreck out of which emerges a dazed brunette (Laura Elena Harring) who starts down the ravine in heels toward L.A.'s twinkling sprawl, Lynch seems willing and able to go further into the void than even that granddaddy of Hollywood oblivion, *Sunset Boulevard*.

But this being Lynch's Hollywood, we know we're not being primed for high-spirited sleuthing but something closer to nasty urban legend. Already, a perfectly healthy neurotic has elsewhere collapsed at the sight of a grinning monster lurking behind the local diner; these Nancy Drews in search of Rita's identity are wandering unwittingly into a horror

the natural extension of her own hunger for self-revision. Rita's mental haze, her full-figured aloofness, is just about the sexiest thing she can handle.

Lynch has long been a card-carrying romantic. He has technical lusciousness down to a science, but the swoon always makes more sense when linked to the wild at heart or even out-of-body yearnings of elephant men. And sure enough, something does shift here: Betty and Rita's kiss is so pure, it sends the picture reeling. Suddenly, one of Rita's few possessions—an ominous blue key found at the bottom of her purse—fits into in a bizarre box they take home from a nightclub and, with a twist, all bets are off: Betty is gone, or perhaps reborn as a strung-out failure named Diane. (Watts' range in the double-role is breathtaking.) Rita is now a glamorous star named Camilla Rhodes, long over Betty or Diane or whoever she's become. Even by lesbian standards, it feels like the shortest affair on record: Diane, forlorn, brews coffee in her dingy, mold-green kitchen and mourns a career that never materialized;

Camilla basks in the attentions of some jerk director with a goatee.

Is it much later? Or earlier? The answer may lie somewhere in between; a large part of Lynch's daring is in his confidence that you'll want to figure this one out—and to his credit, I think he's got us squirming on the hook. (I have my own theories, but don't drop me a line unless you want to be wrecked.) As far as altered states go, the last 45 minutes can't be beat. Camilla invites the frustrated Diane to a party; as she leads her through a dark glade, a "shortcut" to her mansion and success, you feel the power dynamic in full reversal, confidence and humiliation swapped. Lynch is pulling off nothing less than a Buñuelean tour de force by turning his surrealism into psychology; he knows our expectations and uses that command to secretly establish a yawning madness. With *Mulholland Drive*, the trance that comes so easily to him is finally charged with the doom of a classic. ☞

Joshua Rothkopf can be reached at rothkopf@inthesetimes.com.



Through a glass darkly.

After those first nocturnal impressions—floating red tail-lights and smoke carried off by midnight breezes—the menace never lifts, even at warped high noon. Enter Betty (Naomi Watts), a quaking young hopeful fresh off the plane and ready for her three-picture deal. (Hers is a perkiness heightened to dementia: Watts manages to outbeam even her pink sweater.) She can't believe her posh new digs vacated by a traveling aunt, or her showbizzy landlord Coco, or the nice cabbie at the airport who loaded her bags in the trunk. She doesn't even seem to mind that nude stranger in her shower, our mystery B-girl from the car crash. Rita, she calls herself, after eyeing a poster for *Gilda*, and it soon becomes clear that she didn't quite make it out of the accident whole. Rita's amnesia works like catnip on Betty; Lynch lingers on her sympathetic reaction long enough for it to ripen into something slightly impure, à la "Look what I got!" Betty has come all the way from Deep River, Ontario for the movies and—wouldn't you know it—they've found her.

film. Gothic courtyards and shadowy hallways become close to unbearable, and a rotting corpse sends the women shrieking. It's here, about halfway in, that *Mulholland Drive* would have ended, had it not been dumped by ABC as the television pilot it was originally intended to be. But I ask: Has there been a more promising first act since Laura Palmer cracked the spine of her diary in *Twin Peaks*?

Still, given the radical expansion that follows, you have to wonder if the gods weren't smiling as network-safe elements—notably a confident detective on the case—are terrifyingly aborted and the movie teeters into apocalypse. There are plenty of sad stories of visionary genius dulled by trim-happy producers (*Greed* comes to mind); less known are the careful refinements that come out of liberation. Lynch, up to now, builds slowly, episodically, deepening Betty and Rita with conspiratorial glances and the subtle casualness of roommates. So the bloom of their attraction is the most tender surprise yet: "I'm in love with you," Betty whispers in the blue glow of their embrace, and it's

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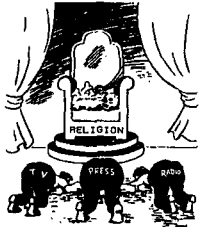
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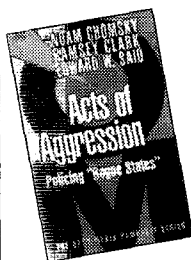
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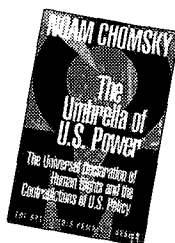
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GIVE WAR A CHANCE

Continued from back page

Rush Limbaugh, Bill O'Reilly, Orrin Hatch Will All Be Fighting This War for Us! These are all honorable men, men of their word, men who would not expect someone else to fight their battles for them. They have all called for war, revenge, blood—and, by God, it is blood I want them to have! Now that we are at war, let us insist that those who have cried the loudest for the killing be the first to go and do just that!

I would like to see, by the end of the day, Rush and Bill, Orrin and the rest of their colleagues down at the recruiting station signing up to join the Army. Sure, I know they are no longer young, but there are many jobs they will be able to do once they get through the Khyber Pass. Surely these men would not expect our sons and daughters to die for something that they themselves would not be willing to die for.

Get your butts over there to Afghanistan and defend a way of life that allows companies like Boeing to get rid of 30,000 people while using the tragedy in New York as their shameful excuse.

Really Cool War Footage. It has been way too long since we've been able to watch those cruise missiles and smart bombs with their little cameras on them sail in and blow the crap out of a bunch of human beings. This time, let's hope the video is in color and that it's attached with a miniature set of Dolby speaker microphones so we can hear the screams and wails of those Afghans as our shrapnel guts them into strips of bacon. Oh, and let's pray the video can be loaded into my Sony Playstation!

Better a Quickie War than the Permanent War. Orwell warned us about this one. Big Brother, in order to control the population, knew that it was necessary for the people to always believe they were in a state of siege, that the enemy was getting closer and closer, and that the war would take a very long

time. That is *exactly* what Bush said in his speech to Congress, and the reason he said it is because he and his buddies want us all in such a state of fear and panic that we would gladly give up the cherished freedoms that our fathers and those before them fought and died for. Who wouldn't submit to searches, restrictions of movement, and the rounding up of anyone who looks suspicious if it would prevent another September 11?

To get these laws passed that will strip us of our rights, they have been telling us that we are in a *long* and *protracted* war that has no end in sight. Don't buy it! We are bombing Afghanistan, and *that* is the only war in progress. It should be over anywhere from a few days from now or in about nine years (Soviet-style). Either way, it will end. The good guys will win. And, if George II is anything like George I, then the bad guy will win, too, getting to live and go on doing what he enjoys doing (what were we, like 40 miles from Baghdad?) while we continue to bomb the innocents (some 500,000 Iraqi children killed by the United States in past 10 years from bombs and sanctions).

As I'm sure you must agree, there are many upsides to this war. Sure, the Emmys got canceled again, and, as a nominee this year, I already found out that I wasn't getting one of those little gold people, so who cares if I can't walk down the red carpet in my Bob Mackie gown? I don't even wear a gown—I wear pants, ill-fitting pants at that! Yesiree, I say, BOMBS AWAY! Rockets red glare! We are all WHITE WITH FOAM!

And please, let's look at the bright side for once: The last time a Bush took us to war and got a 90 percent approval rating, he was toast and a ghost the following year. You can't get better than that. ■

Michael Moore pens satires and other rants for his Web site, www.michaelmoore.com.

GIVE WAR A CHANCE

By Michael Moore

It's about time! I was beginning to worry that George II didn't have it in him, that he might wander off to vacation in Omaha again. But finally, the bombs are raining down on Afghanistan and, as Martha Stewart says, that's a good thing.

Oh, don't get me wrong—I deplore war and killing and violence. But, hey, I'm a pragmatist, I know where I live, this is America and dammit, somebody's ass had to get kicked!

Our Leader, a former baseball club owner, could have at least had the decency to wait one more day until the baseball season was over. Poor Barry Bonds—will anyone even remember what he did a month from now? At least Fox had the good grace to get the football game back on the tube within an hour of the war's start! They *knew* none of us could stomach looking at Stepford Drones from Fox News for the rest of the day.

Fellow liberals, lefties, Greens, workers and even you lovable Gore voters and recovering Democrats—let me tell you why I think this war on Afghanistan is good for all of us:

Network Unanimity in Naming the War.

It has been so confusing the past four weeks, what with all the networks calling this thing we are in by so many names: "America's New War," "America Under Attack," "America Fights Back," "War on Terrorism," etc. Now nearly every network has settled on "America Strikes Back."

I like this because, first of all, it honors George Lucas. We're a humble people, we Americans, so we can't quite bring ourselves to call it "The Empire Strikes Back." "Empire" sounds a little scary, and there's no use reminding the rest of the world that we call all the shots. So "America Strikes Back" is appropriate (and "strikes" has the necessary sports metaphor we like to use when bombing other countries).

The Citizenry Can Now Go Back to What They Were Doing. I don't know about you, but nearly four weeks of anxious and tense anticipation of what would happen next was starting to wear me down. I thought nothing could top what spending the whole summer agonizing over whose baby it was on *Friends* did to me.

But the last four weeks was worse than a bad classic-rock extended drum solo. Now we have resolution. Now we know the ending—the bombing to smithereens of a country so advanced it has, to date, laid a total of 18 miles of railroad tracks throughout the entire country. How very 19th century of them! I hope our missiles were able to take them out. I don't want this thing going on forever. Best that we obliterate them before they come up with some smart idea like the telegraph.

Dick Cheney Has Been Moved into Hiding Again. This can only help. The farther this mastermind can be kept from young Bush, the better. Anytime I hear they have transported Cheney out of town and into a bunker in the woods, I feel safe. And don't worry about him having any workable form of communications with Bush—remember, this is a government which discovers that a known terrorist is taking flying lessons in Florida and does nothing.

Continued on page 29

